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# CHINESE LEGENDS;

OR,

# THE PORCELAIN TOWER.

By "T. T. T."

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
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TO

HIS FRIENDS IN GENERAL,

AND TO

THE PUBLIC IN PARTICULAR,

THE ACCOMPANYING SPECIMENS OF

REAL CHINA

ARE RESPECTFULLY PRESENTED,

BY THEIR MOST OBSEQUIOUS SERVANT

THE MANUFACTURER;

WHO TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY OF INFORMING ALL PARTIES,

(AND, PARTICULARLY, SMALL TEA PARTIES,)

THAT HIS "SERVICES"

ARE ALWAYS AT THEIR COMMAND.

# CONTENTS.


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Invocation .... .... .... .... .... .... | vii |
| Preface .... .... .... .... .... | ix |
| Memoir of the Author .... .... .... .... | xiii |
| THE FIRST STORY. | |
| Ho-Fi of the Yellow Girdle .... .... .... | 1 |
| THE SECOND STORY. | |
| Kublai Khan; or The Siege of Kinsai .... .... .... | 23 |
| THE THIRD STORY. | |
| Fashions in Feet; or the Tale of the Beautiful To-To .... | 42 |
| THE FOURTH STORY. | |
| Hyson and Bohea .... .... .... .... .... | 52 |
| THE FIFTH STORY. | |
| The Porcelain Bath.... .... .... .... .... | 63 |
| THE SIXTH STORY. | |
| The Emperor Hwang-te; or the Plough and the Loom .... | 83 |
| THE SEVENTH STORY. | |
| Marriage in a Mask; or the Cunning Shaver, Chin .... | 99 |
| THE EIGHTH STORY. | |
| The Student of Hanlan; a Tale of Opium-Smoking .... .... | 120 |
| THE NINTH STORY. | |
| The Feast of Lanterns .... .... .... .... | 142 |
| Letters from Sam-Sing to Weep-Weep and from Steoc-Fin to Pin-Wing .... .... .... .... .... | 163 |
| Notes .... .... .... .... .... .... | 173 |

# INVOCATION

## TO THE MUSE OF TEA.

---

Muse of the Central Land, whose soothing power
Celestial bards drink in at twilight's hour;
Who, cheerful promptress of discourse and smiles,
Deign'st even to dwell in these barbarian isles,
A household spirit still at hand to serve us,
And make our poets warm, our prosemen nervous;
Thou from thine oft-filled urn who dost deliver
A stream more potent than Castalia's river,
And even, GREAT MUSE OF TEA! canst strength impart
To milk and water;—hear, where'er thou art!
Perchance even now in this my seventh good cup;
Ah! if it be so, let me stir thee up.
Let not thy bard thine aid in vain require!
Inspire thou me, whilst I thy breath inspire.
List to my prayer, and let me be possess'd
Of rich "outpourings" strained from thy full chest;
Brace, if thou canst, my strings, and give them tone,
And fill my leaves with virtues like thine own.

# ILLUSTRATIONS.


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Fum-Fum and Fee-Fee before the Emperor ... ... | *Title* |
| Ho-Fi caught in his own trap ... ... ... ... | 9 |
| So-Sli's escape from Bou-Wou ... ... ... ... | 13 |
| The Mandarin suspended in his Office ... ... ... | 21 |
| A Chinese Heroine with trophies ... ... ... ... | 30 |
| Kublai Khan's encounter with three Chinese Champions ... | 38 |
| Fashions in Feet ... ... ... ... .. | 43 |
| The Emperor Min te with "a flea in his ear" ... ... | 4 |
| Young Hyson pounded by his Father .. ... ... | 56 |
| Young Hyson's despair at the drowning of Bohea ... ... | 59 |
| Si-Long's arrival at the Philosopher's ... ... ... | 65 |
| The Emperor at Plough ... ... ... ... | 98 |
| Chin the Barber operating ... ... ... ... ... | 119 |
| Chinese true lovers' knot ... ... ... ... | 123 |
| The end of Opium-smoking ... ... ... ... | 141 |
| Hey-ho startled at Fun ... ... ... ... | 149 |
| Hey-ho assisting Fun to escape ... ... ... ... | 153 |
| "Fo save the Emperor!" ... ... ... ... | 172 |

# MEMOIR

## OF THE AUTHOR.

THE follwing paper is a posthumous fragment. With feelings of regret, which will probably be shared in by many of our readers, we have the melancholy office of recording that its amiable and promising writer was cut off—almost pen in hand, so rapidly in his case did death overtake disease—before it could be finished. The fragment will therefore be read by the admirers of his genius with a double interest.

It is well said by Channing, that the higher orders of minds have little materials for biography: the life of intellectual men is inward. That which is external and material in their history bears no kind of proportion to that which is spiritual; and hence a literary and student life—unless it happens, as in the case of Milton and Dante, to have been a "career" also—presents few of those rapid and moving scenes which so much interest the general reader.

Thomas Henry Sealy was born at Halstone, near Cheltenham, we believe, about the year 1811. After rambling about the world for a time, in which period he visited, amongst other countries, the classic land of Italy, and there drank deeply of that perennial fountain of poetic inspiration, he settled down

at Bristol, where the exigencies of his family fixed him for a number of years. Here he conducted several literary undertakings, but, we are grieved to say, with less fortunate results for himself than moral benefits to the community. He was well, we might almost say profoundly, versed in Italian literature and poetry, ancient and modern; and some of his translations from that language are greatly admired for their fidelity and spirit. But he did not confine himself to the humbler office of re-creating the work divine of other hands: he aspired to the personal honour of the poet's vocation. A volume of poems, published long ago under the quaint title of "The Little Old Man in the Wood," will be remembered by the poetical reader for its promise of better things. Natural history and antiquities also engaged his attention: he had a curious eye, and had observed nature for himself. The writer of these lines has frequently heard him dilate with pleasure upon the habits and history of animals in various countries. For several years, previous to 1843, he was editor of *The Western Archæological Magazine*, published in Bristol. At that period he embarked his genius and his fortune in a weekly newspaper, called *The Great Western Advertizer*, which, after a hard struggle for existence, failed, and involved its editor and proprietor in ruin. By this failure, his losses in this undertaking were estimated at 12,000*l*. From the sad effects of this calamity he never recovered. His misfortunes prayed upon a mind naturally sensitive, his health wasted, and, in conjunction with the harassing labours to which they gave rise, in fact necessitated, he was thrown into the consumption which carried him to a premature grave, just as the finer qualities of his mind were beginning to develop themselves, and his position in the world of intellect to be acknowledged. All who had the happiness of his acquaintance loved and honoured him sincerely. Many more, who knew him only in his works, admired the subtle soul, the

delicate irony, the virgin freshness, power, and truth which pervaded them. Of all English writers his genius most resembled that of Goldsmith and Charles Lamb.

For some time before his misfortunes, he conducted a periodical under the title of "Sealy's Western Miscellany," also published at Bristol, and in this he published some of his most charming tales. The book, however, by which he is best known, and by which he will be remembered, is the present volume. Of a work so popular it is needless to say anything in this place.

In this country self-sacrifice is one of the conditions on which intellectual power is wielded. The most potential literature is here anonymous. In criticism and in politics it is the same. The men whose wisdom makes the mind, inspires the laws, creates opinion, controls the literature, and concentrates the intellect of the empire, are almost all unknown by name to the great mass of readers. The world receives the teaching of the oracle, but it only sees the vehicle by which it is conveyed. Jeremy Taylor says "The world knows nothing of its greatest men." We may say with equal truth, the world knows nothing of its most powerful men.

To this high guild of literary workmen Thomas Henry Sealy belonged. Nature had made him a literary man, and she had not withheld the power to compass great intents. Had he lived, he would have achieved them. He fought his part out nobly; and, to the last, his brave spirit struggled against difficulty and depression. Militant or triumphant, his mind was equal to his fate. He died untimely for himself and for the world. But he perished in a high service; and he has left many fellow-labourers behind who loved his virtues and honor his memory, and who, in the words of the dying Douglas,

"Think life only wanting to *his* fame!"

But there is another side of the picture. The author is no more.

After "life's fitful fever he sleeps well." He did his duty manfully when here; and it little recks him now, whether the world remember or forget him. The seeds of truth and goodness which it was given unto him to sow, he has faithfully planted; and it now concerns him little if they who gather in the harvest bless his name or not. He died on Sunday, July the 9th, 1848.

NOVEMBER 1, 1848.

# PREFACE.

RECENT events have directed towards the Chinese a degree of inquiry, which, however strange it may appear that we should have been wanting in attention to the politest of all people, they had never before excited among the dwellers of the West. Few, except those engaged in the China trade, had troubled themselves to learn much beyond what was instilled into them at school from the pages of Goldsmith and Guy, concerning the Celestial Land and its no less celestial inhabitants, when the startling fact of a war breaking out,—a war which might probably involve the ruin and death of some thousands of our own countrymen, and of some hundreds of thousands of our brethren in the East, and still more the rise in the price of tea,—excited a sudden and general anxiety to know something of the character and resources of the four hundred

millions whom we had sent out two cock-boats and a walnut-shell to conquer.

Demand always produces supply: this, at least, though denied by some,—mendicants, creditors, and rakish young gentlemen,—who have brought it to the test of the *Novum Organon*, is a favourite axiom with many of our political economists: and authentic works, giving detailed accounts of the country and its peculiar people, have lately been poured in upon us until the booksellers' houses are almost converted into China shops. Many of the tomes which have thus been carted into the literary market are very excellent library volumes; but furniture which is adapted for the study, is, for the most part, too heavy for the drawing-room or boudoir.

We were sorry to observe, that so excellent and well-bred a people as our Chinese, if not excluded from, were at least little regarded in those apartments into which the Chinese only could convey additional refinements; and the belief that this resulted chiefly from the gravity of the attire in which they have usually appeared in this country, was our inducement to try the experiment of presenting them in a livelier dress.

The dress, however, in which they are here presented,

though the colours are lively and the fabrics light, are made up exclusively, as will be perceived, of real Chinese materials. We will confess that it was at first our intention to assume the credit of the entire fabrication; but we feared that King's College* might detect us; and we have deemed it politic, therefore, to acknowledge our obligations to the Celestial writers, and in all other particulars to adhere strictly to truth.

We would have it understood then, that, the following stories have been compiled from various original sources; and though, consistently with our purpose, now abandoned, of making over to ourselves the fee-simple of this literary property, we have altered the style, that the Chinese authors might not be detected thereby,—we have nevertheless, scrupulously adhered to the course of the narratives, to the characters of the agents, and to whatever might be essential for conveying just notions of the manners and customs, and minds of our brethren in the pigtailed East.

The title of the volume is adopted from a work, nearly similar in plan, by Klam-Klae; but the title is all we have borrowed from that writer, as we did not find his stories worth the labour of translation.

* There is a Professor of Chinese at King's College.

It may be as well to observe here, that the pagodas in China are either of seven or nine stories in height, and that the celebrated PORCELAIN TOWER of Nanking consists of NINE STORIES.

LONDON, 1848.

# CHINESE LEGENDS;

OR,

# THE PORCELAIN TOWER.

## HO-FI OF THE YELLOW GIRDLE.*

O wretch, that with malignant fang,
Would's't seek t'inflict some mortal pang;
Bethink thee well how bowstrings twang,
How swords do smite and hemp doth hang!—SLANG.

MORE graceful than the bamboo, and fairer than rice, was So-Sli, the daughter of the philosopher Poo-Poo. Her foot was no longer than her finger, so that when she walked she tottered in the most engaging manner, and was obliged to seek the support of a reed or of a hand-maiden.† So light was her form, and so lovely was her face, and so helpless was her air, that when she appeared abroad she attracted the notice of all, as a straw which a juggler of Shanghi balances on the tip of his nose. Her brows were arched like the feathers in the tail of the domestic bird of the river; her eyes were smaller than the kernels of the almond,

* The story of Ho-Fi is selected from among the romances of the well-known Hou-de-Kaw-Lim; a writer as prolific and various as our own Anon. He resembles that writer, too, in the ill fortune which has militated against his obtaining the fame due to his genius and industry, from the authorship of all his most excellent works having been uniformly claimed by unprincipled and shameless persons, who have succeeded in tearing the bamboo-sprigs from his brows. He is still living, though arrived at a patriarchal age. No library can be considered complete without a collected edition of his works.

† See note A.

and were free from the disfigurement of lashes; her hair was like a cobweb of the black spiders of Chen-si; her nose was small, and beautifully flat; her lips were as two large pink caterpillars which the cooks of Pecheli have prepared in the banquet for the Son of Heaven. The fame of her loveliness had spread throughout the province of Kiang-Si, and many a manly spirit yearned towards her, even upon the *report* of her beauty.

Many were the solicitations made to her father for the hand of the lovely So-Sli; and he might have married her to mandarins, both civil and military, as many as he pleased. But old Poo-Poo was a sage and a philanthropist, and had devoted himself much to the investigation of the causes of human happiness and misery, and had determined that marriage might be highly conducive to one or to the other, according as it should be, or should not be, conducted upon scientific principles. Of the scientific principles upon which marriage should be conducted, he had formed a theory of his own; and it had been a source of the deepest regret to him that he had not devised his theory until after his own marriage.

However, as his wife was now dead, that had become a matter of comparatively little importance. He determined that his daughter should have the full benefit to be derived from his idea; and, for a Chinese, it must be conceded that his principles exhibited much liberality of feeling. This was particularly evinced in one of his theorems; a theorem which, however, appeared in the eyes of his countrymen so extraordinary, that, but for some charitable doubts which were entertained as to his sanity, it would probably have brought down upon him the heavy displeasure of the government.

He was the first of the celestial people who had ever questioned or doubted the propriety of a marriage between persons who had had no previous acquaintance with each other. He was rash enough to start and maintain this opinion; and furthermore, he considered that a certain somewhat of congeniality should subsist between, and be discovered by, the parties, before they should proceed to bind themselves indissolubly together. He determined, therefore, not only that his daughter should see her lord before she became a wife, but—such was the

peculiar tenderness of his paternal affection, and so far had the heresy of innovation possessed him,—that she should not be made over to any person towards whom she manifested a decided dislike.

Two great mandarins, Hang-Yu and Yu-be-Hung, and a certain rich merchant, Tin, had sent costly presents to her father; and the eloquent Tung, a graduate of the college of Hanlan,* had composed ten volumes of moral sentences in praise of the beauty of So-Sli; but though he perused the books, and graciously accepted the presents, Poo-Poo rejected these applicants, who lived too far off to make their addresses in person. It fared no better with many of various rank,—manufacturers, and proprietors of rice-grounds, silk-feeders, barge-owners, and officers civil and military, who, dwelling in the neighbourhood, had opportunities of seeing and of being looked upon by the lovely eyes of So-Sli. She had expressed herself as being by no means averse to Tung or to Tin, to Hang-Yu or Yu-be-Hung: but these she had never seen. Those whom she saw found no favour in her sight. One was too tall, another was too short; a third was too fat, a fourth too thin; this too gay, and that too serious; Ting-a-ting's voice was too gentle, Ding-Dong's was too loud; one was too fond of sweet potato—and sweet potato she disliked; another not sufficiently partial to dog, and dog was her favorite dish. In fact, So-Sli was by no means easy to please.

Here we may pause to remark, that the multiplicity of presents which for a long time poured in upon Poo-Poo, were well nigh procuring converts to his system among old gentlemen who had marriageable daughters; but at last suitors grew chary of their presents, and withheld them till an interview with the young lady should have sealed their fortune.

In the town in which dwelt Poo-Poo and his lovely daughter, So-Sli, there resided a young man who boasted his relationship to the imperial family, being in fact a descendant from an Emperor who had occupied the throne about a hundred and fifty years before.

The Emperor of China looks with commendable affection upon all his poor relations, of whom he keeps an inventory of about ten thousand; and, according to their several degrees of

* See note B.

affinity, he allots to all, by a graduated scale, certain annual stipends, and permits them to wear some badge by which they may be distinguished as being of his kin. This badge, whether cloak, or shawl, or belt, or cap, is of the imperial colour, yellow; and in the particular instance of Ho-Fi, the young man of whom we speak, was a silken girdle, whence he was known throughout that neighbourhood as Ho-Fi of the Yellow Girdle. He furthermore enjoyed an allowance of three dollars and two sacks of rice per month.

Being thus a cousin, though a distant one, of the Son of Heaven, he would have conceived it much beneath his dignity to have followed for his livelihood any profession or trade; and as he had desires and ambition to which his means were quite inadequate, he was driven to curious shifts at times, in the vulgar words of the West, to procure salt for his porridge, or indeed porridge for his salt.

Ho-Fi heard all the tongues in the neighbourhood eloquent in praise of the beauty of So-Sli; but he heard them likewise no less voluble in condemnation of her whimsicality and waywardness. Fresh stories were every day told of her rejection of some meritorious suitor; and as none seemed likely to prove altogether agreeable to her very fastidious taste, those who would have been glad to obtain such a prize became shy of advancing their claims. But Ho-Fi, with less intrinsic worth than many, was not of a character to be daunted by the fear of the negotiation proving unsatisfactory, and he resolved to enlist himself as one of the competitors for the hand of So-Sli.

Ho-Fi, though quite a young man, had already been six times married; and on every occasion had had the misfortune to lose his wife within a few weeks after their union. As seven is accounted a particularly fortunate number, it is not to be wondered at that he was desirous to adventure once more. His six dear wives were all laid on the shelf together, and he wanted one other, in order "to make up a set."

Ho-Fi rejoiced in many advantages, which had already several times stood him in good stead in circumstances somewhat similar to those in which he was about to exert his tactics. He was possessed of what his lovely countrywomen were prone to consider a handsome person. His finger-nails, by virtue of well-

contrived splints, he managed to maintain an inch and a half in length; he was quite free from whiskers or beard; and his head was always kept cleanly shaven, except the usual tuft at the crown, which, of peculiar blackness and strength, and neatly tied up with silk, depended down his back almost to the bend of his knee. He was particular, moreover, in his dress; and as it was well known that his funds were of the most limited, it was a matter of surprise among his neighbours how he became possessed of so very respectable a wardrobe. And if this was a mystery to them, what wonder that I, a stranger and barbarian, am quite unable to explain it? I leave it to your conjectures, and I feel sure that there are some among my countrymen to whom a solution will be intuitively easy. Person and dress, it will be admitted, serve as two powerful talismans in such adventures as that upon which he was going to set forth; but he was possessed of other advantages incalculably more important. These were, a limitless assurance, and that determined perseverance, which, disregarding repulses, returns again and again to the charge; or which in simpler phrase, "will not take *no* for an answer." To these may be added an adaptability of disposition, which could fall in with the humours of all parties, and a readiness in discovering the weak points of the enemy, and directing an attack accordingly.

"'Tis but venturing," said Ho-Fi; "and if I fail, I will not hang myself up by my pig-tail like a Boo-Bee, nor run myself through with a thumb-nail like a Ni-Ni." Boo-Bee and Ni-Ni were two celebrated Werters of China.

His design thus formed, he set systematically to work to carry it into effect; and began by picking acquaintance with the philosopher Poo-Poo. Observing that venerable person cheapening the hind-quarter of a prize polecat in the meat-market, with his usual ease and address he managed to fall into conversation with him; and by a little banter, from time to time agreeably directed to the butcher, soon obtained for the philosopher that abatement in the price of the tempting morsel for which Poo-Poo himself might probably in vain have striven. Having declared his own predilection for polecat, and particularly for the hind-quarter, he led the discourse by easy gradations from polecats to weasels, from weasels to rats, from rats to dogs,

from dogs to pigs, from pigs to his fair countrywomen, and so to the celebrated beauty So-Sli, the daughter of the sage Poo-Poo. Of the philosopher himself he expressed great admiration, and regretted that he was not so fortunate as to enjoy his acquaintance, nay, that he did not even so much as know him by sight. Poo-Poo was a lover of wisdom—but what philosopher was ever yet proof against adulation? or would not feel gratified at overhearing his own praises in cases like the present, where they could not be intended as flattery? Ho-Fi had already secured himself a high place in the philosophical estimation of Poo-Poo.

It will readily be supposed that Poo-Poo was not anxious to turn the conversation out of the channel into which it had thus accidentally flowed; and he sounded his new friend's opinions on the subject of his pet matrimonial theory. This Ho-Fi of course applauded "to the very echo,"—by which expression is intended that his words were mere mockery, *vox et prœterea nihil.*

"Were you to ask me," said he, "who is the greatest of ancient or modern sages, I should answer, Poo-Poo. Were you to ask me who, of all, has advanced a theory most likely to be extensively beneficial to the human race, I should answer, Poo-Poo. Were you to ask me for a word synonymous with philosophy, I should answer Poo-Poo. Nor do I doubt but that the day will come when the wisdom of Poo-Poo will be universally admitted, and his name be adduced as a conclusive settlement of all disputed questions; when, if any one shall be asked his reason, he will answer Poo-Poo; if he be asked his authority, he will answer Poo-Poo; when criticism will be condensed in those two syllables Poo-Poo; and when those same two syllables Poo-Poo will suffice to upset criticism; in short, when he that speaks Poo-Poo the loudest will be the best logician, and when all discussion will be but a matter of Poo-Poo."

That day Ho-Fi dined with Poo-Poo, on the hind-quarter of the prize polecat.

The morsel was small, but it was choice.

Having so soon and so easily insinuated himself into the good graces of the father, he next sought an opportunity of winning his way into those of the daughter. He boldly expressed his desire to Poo-Poo; and a day was settled upon which he should be formally introduced to her,—a ceremony not

to be conducted with too great precipitation. In the interval he was careful to collect all information regarding the whims and prejudices of the lovely So-Sli.

He came, he saw, he conquered; or we should rather write, he came, *she* saw, he conquered. His attire was studiously elegant, and he had selected such colours as he had found, from the report of some of her acquaintance, were the most agreeable to her. His beautifully embroidered petticoat of crimson silk was well calculated to take the feminine fancy; his shawl might have won the heart even of an English lady; his cap he had procured from one of the most eminent *modistes* of Pekin; and the tippet, which formed part of outdoor dress, was of the most costly fur. His long black hair was carefully plaited, and hung far down his back; he wore a necklace of pearls, much coveted by his young competitors in fashion; his scent-bottle was replenished with the choicest essence; and he carried a valuable fan, which he fluttered with peculiar grace.

This attention to externals produced at once a favourable impression upon So-Sli, who was herself particular in her attire. She usually wore a long frock-coat of blue or green cloth over a pink waistcoat, and her trowsers were always of the newest cut. She went to considerable expense to procure the most elegant pipes, and piqued herself upon her nice judgment in her choice of tobacco.

The town, like some other Chinese towns, was upon the point of surrendering to the formidable "demonstration" made by the enemy; but when he opened upon it simultaneously, the light artillery of flattery and the heavy artillery of gifts, (the latter consisting of two great guns, the one a gold snuff-box, and the other a Chinese poodle,) the gates flew open, and he marched in triumph into the citadel,—his lady's heart. The vanquished So-Sli kept the snuff-box, ate the poodle, and accepted the heart and the hand of Ho-Fi.

They were married, and a fortnight flew by in two days: or perhaps the young pair made some miscalculation, as the almanacks had not predicted this.

The cranium, we would observe, is the dwelling-house of the soul; the organ of time is its time-piece; but when the soul sits all day in its back rooms, it sometimes forgets to wind up its clock.

Each was constantly devising means to gratify the other; and the only occasions of strife that arose between them were when each endeavoured to force upon the other the choicest morsels of fox, or ferret, or frog, or whatever constituted their delicate little meal for the day.

One morning, Ho-Fi for a while absented himself from his beloved So-Sli, and went into the city. When he returned, he took from his pouch, or reticule, a small packet of tea.

"My dearest So-Sli," he said, "I have a friend who is particular in the cultivation of plants. With so much skill and care are his experiments conducted, that he has succeeded in obtaining bananas from his orange-trees, and in converting a pine-apple into a gooseberry. He has lately directed his attention to the improvement of a young tea-tree. He planted it with a silver spade, manured it with silk-worms and doves' marrow, and he daily waters the earth around it with rose's tears and cinnamon juice. He has hitherto gathered but two ounces of the leaves, one of which has been presented to the Emperor, and the other he has transmitted to me, as being the oldest of his friends. I have brought it here for my darling So-Sli. As you love me, make an infusion of its leaves, and drink."

"Nay," said So-Sli, "if it be so choice, you shall drink it, not I. What exceedingly curious leaves! and, what is most remarkable is, that they are exactly like others. But what is this dust upon them?"

"That," answered Ho-Fi, "is a substance derived from the silkworms, and is what, had they not been buried, would have formed the down on the wings when they became moths. But you must drink this most dainty infusion; I have prepared it purposely for you, and to refuse it would be to show how little you loved your tender Ho-Fi."

Whilst speaking, Ho-Fi had poured hot water on the leaves; and he offered to his beloved the cup containing the fragrant infusion. She, however, insisted that he should drink it; and an affectionate contest took place between them, each wishing to give up to the other all the enjoyment of so exquisite a draught. So-Sli at first positively refused to taste a drop; then she would consent that he should leave one sip for her; and

then, that if he would take half, she would drink the remainder; but Ho-Fi was obstinately determined that she should have all, or at least should take the first draught. At last their affectionate entreaties began to change to tones of anger and impatience; when, to settle the matter at once, So-Sli took the cup, and, proceeding to the open window, emptied it in her husband's view, declaring that, as it had become a cause of quarrel, it should not be tasted by either.

Their anger blew over, and several times since they had taken tea together in perfect amity. One evening they were seated to that important occupation, and Ho-Fi had just finished his first cup, when So-Sli observed she did not think the tea so good as usual. Ho-Fi agreed with her in opinion, and using a common Chinese imprecation, wished a rotten root to the tree that bore it.

"What," said So-Sli, bursting into a fit of uncontrollable laughter, "after all the pains your poor friend has taken to nourish it with silkworms and spice? Oh! now that is too cruel a desire!"

Ho-Fi stared, and turned somewhat pale. "Why do you revert to that subject, he said. "Methinks it were better to let such a matter rest."

"Nay," said So-Sli, still laughing violently, "I said you should drink the tea; and when I pretended to pour it from the window, I poured it only into an earthern pan which lay outside. I have had it warmed for you now, but am sorry you like it so little."

Ho-Fi turned very pale; and his pig-tail, "with the effect of fear," stood out horizontally and stifly from his head. For a few moments he was struck motionless, but anon he started up, and called loudly for warm water.

"Perfidious woman!" he shrieked, "hast thou poisoned thy husband?"

"Poisoned!" said So-Sli. "Was the tea then poisoned? I remember that white dust—but can moth's feathers be poison?"

"It burns! it burns!" cried Ho-Fi, in a frantic manner. "For Fo's sake, bring me an emetic, a stomach-pump—no, no, that is not yet invented—but blisters, cataplasms—anything!"

He was put in bed; physicians were sent for; he raved till he was exhausted, and then lay asleep, or insensible, for some hours. When his sense returned, he became aware of the expressions he had used, and being calmer, he endeavoured to explain them away. He said that the tea was of such wonderful potency as to have deprived him of reason more rapidly than the strong spirit distilled from rice could have done. He had fancied in his delirium that his wife had put poison in his cup; but he now fully appreciated the absurdity of such a fear. He should write to the friend from whom he had received the leaves, a timely intimation, that should the Emperor swallow the infusion intended for the bodily solace of that celestial person, he, the unfortunate cultivator of this ardent tea would unquestionably be put to death by all the ingenuities of torture.

Ho-Fi had a strong constitution to support him against poisoned tea and three Chinese physicians. He slowly recovered from their *effects*.

He was restored once more to his fond wife; but, fond as she had always shown herself, So-Sli could not prevent the intrusion into her mind of an unpleasant suspicion that her affectionate

husband had offered her poisoned tea, from a too lively solicitude to put her quite out of reach of those ugly customers, care and sorrow. Long before her marriage, surmises had been whispered which had even reached her ears, that at least a few of his former six wives had been dealt with unfairly; but no one, wife or otherwise, volunteered any evidence against him; and the Chinese had not arrived at those refinements in chemical science which enable our western luminaries, by distilling a bone, or making a fricassee of a muscle, to detect the millionth part of the shadow of nothing in one who is supposed to have died by poison.

It could hardly have been hinted that a man was such a Bluebeard, without strong reason assigned for so supposing. Perhaps, to some minds, the mere fact of his having been married six times, and having in every instance become a widower within two months, may suffice to justify a suspicion; but if a *motive* should be sought that could render such heinous villany probable, it might be mentioned that on the marriage of a Yellow Girdle he is allowed by his cousin, the Emperor, a sum of one hundred taels (in addition to his usual stipend), to assist in furnishing his house; and on the death of his wife one hundred and twenty more, to assist in furnishing her sepulchre. And Ho-Fi was by no means the first of whom it had been reported that he sought by a succession of such profitable marriages and deaths to raise his very inconsiderable income into a handsome competency.

So-Sli could not avoid a suspicion; but as she really loved Ho-Fi she tried to repress it, and not to entertain such evil thoughts as must, if confirmed, have given a death-blow to her affection. Still she was haunted by a fear that he might endeavour by other devices to lay her on the shelf with his former wives. The "shelf" whereupon his former wives were laid, was a shelf of rock at a small distance from the city; a place upon which such persons as could not afford to purchase ground for the burial of their deceased friends, availed themselves of the common right of disposing coffins*. He had, therefore, appropriated to himself a portion of this ledge, where the six coffins of his wives were ranged side by side, in the neatest order, like so many volumes of one book, that might, not inappropriately,

* See note, C.

have been termed collectively, "The Works of Ho-Fi." Upon each were inscribed the words, "Wife of Ho-Fi," and the name besides of the occupant, as a brief table of contents.

I am sorry to say, that had So-Sli been more suspicious than she was, she would therein have done her husband no wrong. There was nothing he so earnestly wished as to have his new volume firmly put up in a camphor-wood binding, and neatly lettered to match the others.

Ho-Fi remembered an incident in a famous Chinese tragedy*, an original device for disposing of an obnoxious person, which he imagined he might turn to a felicitous account. He procured a savage dog, and having purchased a lady's dress of peculiar colours, and another of similar appearance, although of inferior quality, he filled the latter with straw, bones, and offal, and encouraged the fierce animal to tear this effigy in pieces. The creature was well pleased with the prize he discovered within, and Ho-Fi repeated his experiment on several successive days. When he considered the dog to be sufficiently familiarized with the figure, he tied him up, and kept him for some time without food. The insidious Yellow Girdle then made a present to his lady of the other and choicer dress, expressing a desire that she might immediately indue it. This, not, however, until she had examined it with an apprehensive eye, she did: and he affected to be much gratified at beholding her in her new garment. He, however, pretended to have business which would call him from home for an hour, and begged that she would wait his return in a grotto in the garden; but he particularly requested that she would allow no one to open a chest which he had had placed in a court of the house, and of which he said the fastening had been accidentally broken. Excusing himself from explaining to her just then what it contained, he promised that he would do so by and by.

When So-Sli was left alone, she communed with herself. "Who knows," she said, "what man-trap or spring-gun my beloved husband may have prepared for me in the grotto? It will not, I fear, be wise to venture thither. And, what can be enclosed within this chest which he wishes to keep secret from me? Now I would wager six pots of pickled earth-worms that

* See note, D.

he has concealed in that the grave-clothes which he intends for his affectionate So-Sli. So-Sli, then, resolved to examine the chest forthwith. But first she went to a cage, in which was her husband's bird of good luck, a white-necked crow*. Ho-Fi valued this bird beyond all his earthly possessions: he had made it tame, and had attached it to him, and he considered that whilst he possessed it, no material ill-fortune could befal him. So-Sli frequently fed it, and it had become fond of her also, from which it was believed that its kindly influence would extend to her. She took it now from its cage, and placed it on her wrist, and having tendered it a kiss, which was affectionately received and reciprocated, she went into the yard to discover the contents of the mysterious chest. She unhesitatingly raised the lid; but let it fall again with great precipitation, as with a loud growl a savage dog attempted to spring from within.

So-Sli was off with greater expedition than is frequently prac-

* See note, E.

tised by the footless ladies of the Flowery Land; and the cover of the chest having fallen on the back of Bou-Wou,—such was the name of the fierce quadruped,—she was able to gain a few paces before he had struggled from beneath it.

It would soon, however, have been all over with poor So-Sli,—for the dog had caught a glimpse of the dress so familiar to him, and would, therefore, have mistaken his mistress for his daily bread,—had she not, with great presence of mind, seized Ho-Fi's bird of good-luck by the neck, and whisking it rapidly three times round, thrown it to her hungry pursuer. As he jumped aside to snap at this, So-Sli reached the door, and, closing it against him, secured it with several bolts.

When Ho-Fi returned, So-Sli told him that a savage dog had got loose in the court, and that his bird of good-luck had disappeared.

"As I looked in the cage," she said, "suddenly I beheld him wax paler and paler, till, having become thinner than mist, he passed between the bars, and what became of him after I cannot at all tell."

Ho-Fi was inconsolable for the loss of his bird. "Better," said he, "to lose nine wives than to lose a bird of good luck." And inwardly he feared lest the bird of good luck having thus evaporated in the presence of So-Sli might indicate the calamity he most dreaded—that he should lose no more wives.

In a few days, however, his invention was again in active exercise. Perceiving that So-Sli's suspicions were awakened, he judged it best to send his dog back to the place in which he had been trained; and he would not try a fresh experiment with him.

Another week had passed; it was evening, and the shadows of the western hills were gradually extending eastward over the richly cultivated fields. We mention this, not as necessary to the elucidation of our story, but merely because an erroneous opinion seems to have possessed the minds of many, that shadows are unknown in China. The artists of the celestial empire exhibit their *hopeful* character by omitting the dark side of every picture. They would make you believe that Peter Schlemihl's friend had walked through the land, and bought shadow and shade, every inch of the commodity. Foreigners, however, have

not discovered that nature, in this particular, has framed for China laws different from those in operation over other portions of the globe: but the Chinese seem really to be unaware that shadow exists among them; and in their writings and discourse, as in their pictures, always represent their country as an all-enlightened land.

It was evening; and the beautiful So-Sli was sitting in a verandah, very diligently engaged in embroidering a dress, and chewing betel, when Ho-Fi approached, and assuming an appearance of sudden alarm and solicitude, exclaimed,

"By the pig-tail and thumb-nails of Con-fut-tsze, explain to me what ails my ever sweetest So-Sli! What sudden and malevolent disease is endeavouring to pick the lock of my casket of a thousand jewels? Your complexion, sweet mouse of my bosom, is like silk, your eyes are as dull as a stewed shark's fin, and I see well that you must be under the evil influence of the melancholic Saturn: thence cold has gained a predominancy over heat in your temperament, and dryness over moisture. Go, therefore, to your chamber; avoid all yellow objects, and also those of gloomy white; you had better, indeed, put out your lantern, and close your window, that you may see nothing but a lively black about you. I will go hence, lest the hue of my girdle exercise a malignant effect upon you; and if you will betake yourself to bed, I will send hither a physician of great skill, who will feel your pulses, and determine from the stars what medicines you should use."

The Chinese possess many secrets of physical science quite unknown to the philosophers of Europe. Among others is the mysterious dependance of particular colours upon particular planets; yellow upon Saturn, for example, and black upon Mercury. White is their mourning colour; and black, as its opposite, must needs, therefore, be regarded among them as having a particularly gay and agreeable character.

A Chinese physician is not content with feeling one pulse of his patient; he must feel many. From each he learns somewhat of the disease, and he needs no other indications to guide him. It is a simple plan, and removes most of the difficulties that beset the European doctor in the formation of his diagnosis; pulse with him is everything; like the Brahmin, he lives upon

pulse. He consults, indeed, the planets, as we did some century since; but in one thing he resembles our modern pharmacopeists, —that beyond all stars he believes in the healing virtues of Mercury.

So-Sli wondered what the solicitude of her husband might portend. Was Bou-Wou awaiting her in her chamber, and preparing a dose of bark? "You don't bite me so easily," thought So-Sli; and she entreated Ho-Fi that if she should immediately betake herself to bed, he would retire to rest at the same time. He excused himself on the ground that he must forthwith call a physician: and though for a while she made some objections to this, having ever entertained a great dislike to doctor's stuff and doctor's learning, which she classed together as stuff and nonsense, she could not but give in at last, as he insisted upon it with all the earnestness of affectionate solicitude.

Ho-Fi accordingly went to seek the physician; and So-Sli, taking a lantern, and having glanced in a mirror, to assure herself of what all along she had strongly suspected, that she was *not* so yellow as silk, and that her eyes were *not* so dull as a stewed shark's fin, proceeded to her chamber, and very cautiously opening the door, threw in a bone before she would enter, to find if the coast were clear.

As no dog snapped at the bone, So-Sli felt sufficiently assured that her canine enemy was not in the apartment. She ventured into it, therefore, but moved about with great circumspection, and she examined the room with the utmost care, to discover *what* danger might be concealed within it; for she had fully made up her mind that there was *some*.

She looked up the chimney; she pryed in every corner; she turned about the table and chairs; she looked in the oven under the bed. Yes, truly; the oven was under the bed. So to place it is a common practice in the Chinese empire, and unquestionably it is an acute plan: in one side of a chamber is an arched recess, in which is placed the bed on a raised platform and beneath that the oven. What a very cosy thing upon a winter's night! The warming-pan as large as the mattress. You put your bread in the oven, and have a hot roll in bed. But perhaps this practice may have done something towards making the Chinese rather a crusty people.

So-Sli was not yet satisfied. "What," said she "an' if I find needles in my bed?" and the mere idea gave her a stitch in her side. She lifted the bed-clothes, but let them fall again much more quickly; she was frightened, but she did not shriek. She gave utterance only to a little gasping cry, such as might proceed from a terrified "sucking dove;" and she did not run away, for though she had arrived at womanhood, her feet were as those of an infant. However, she tottered back a few paces, and then paused to consider what she should do.

But what had she seen in the bed? Had any of you seen it, my fair readers, the apparition of the old gentleman's tail, to which it bore a very marked resemblance could scarcely have frightened you more. It was a huge black adder. You must not, however, suppose that, though startled, our little celestial lady was scared at all in the same degree that you would have been; by reason that she had been on the most familiar terms with many of his kin in the kitchen.

So-Sli hobbled quietly out of the room; she called a female servant, and sent her into the court to bring a young rat from the coop; to its leg they tied a small stone, and put it in a large, long earthen pot with a small neck; and just peeping under the clothes of the bed to see whereabouts the adder lay, they thrust this in with the mouth towards him. They listened and after a time fancied that they heard him glide into it, and this was confirmed by a little squeak from the rat; so, cautiously lifting the clothes, they suddenly raised the jar upon the end, and put a stopper over its mouth. The adder could not but perceive that he was rather awkwardly situated. "I shall 'go to pot,'" thought he; but it was of no use to make a coil about it.

So-Sli sat up to wait the return of her loving and liege lord; "I shall stay by him a little yet," she said; "an adder shall not be our divider."

Two or three hours elapsed ere he came back: he had forgotten the physician.

As he entered he seemed startled at beholding her. "My dearest So-Sli," he said, "how is it that you have not retired to bed as I requested?"

"Whilst you are absent from me," she answered, "how could

I have rested? I should have been haunted by dragons, and demons, and cockatrices. Besides, I expected to see the physician, and I was not willing that he should visit me in my bed-chamber. How is it that he comes not with you?"

"His own son," replied Ho-Fi; "is on the point of death, and I could not induce him to leave his beside: but he desired that you should not rise from your couch whilst the cold influence was upon you. He bad me to spend the night in watching and fasting; at midnight to gather certain simples on the hill without the city, from which to-morrow he will prepare your medicines. I conjure you, then, as you love my yellow girdle, to go to bed without more delay."

So-Sli at last consented to go to bed alone; but she would not do so until he should have partaken, with her, of a soup, which she said she had prepared for him with great care, believing that it would be agreeable to him after being so long exposed to the damp of the night. To this, so far as himself was concerned, Ho-Fi had no reasonable objection to urge; but for her sake he wished that it had not been made, and he earnestly advised her by no means to take any part thereof. The night air had given Ho-Fi an appetite.

So-Sli promised; and they sat down on either side of a small bamboo table. A lantern was placed upon it, and the soup, introduced in a covered bowl, was put before Ho-Fi that he might help himself. He had placed his hand upon the cover, when So-Sli accidentally knocked the lantern from the table, and the light was extinguished. She rose suddenly from her chair in great alarm, and in doing this upset the little table, so that the soup-bowl was thrown into the lap of Ho-Fi. Ho-Fi had on a skin apron, which he usually wore when he sat down to meals, and this he held up to catch his supper as it fell. But alack for luckless Ho-Fi! his supper caught him by the wrist, and made him roar with agony. So-Sli knew his partiality for viper soup, but had forgotten to have the reptile *cooked*.

But So-Sli did not escape with impunity. Ho-Fi chased her round the apartment, and driving her at last into a corner, beat her with his knotted pigtail in an unmerciful manner, until the pain from the bite he had received in his wrist made him fall down upon the floor, and grind his head against it. Whilst he

was so employed his wife stepped upon his shoulder, and jumping over him, escaped from the house. The fright she was in gave her power to run as never before her legs had carried her, and that, too, without crutches. Fright does not always thus assist us in getting out of a *hobble*.

When the first impetus supplied by fear had abated, she assumed somewhat more of her ordinary walk. Several times she was hailed by the watchmen as she passed through the streets; but they allowed her to proceed; and at last, sorely spent with the fatigue of her long and unsupported tottering, she arrived at her father's house.

The philosopher had already retired to rest. He was angry at being thus aroused, but his indignation was beyond all bounds when he heard his daughter's story. "I will appeal," he said, "to Peking in this matter; and we will hang Ho-Fi in his yellow girdle."

Ho-Fi, meanwhile, when the first paroxysms of pain had subsided, sent for a barber-surgeon, and had his wrist, which was swollen to the size of the calf of his leg, examined and dressed. Moreover, having no doubt heard of that ancient practice in chirurgery which cured the wound by anointing the weapon, he had the viper dressed also; and revenge furnished an excellent sauce, and greatly improved his supper.

Poo-Poo, according to promise, made his appeal to the Emperor. As Ho-Fi boasted his relationship to the imperial family, this was the properest course; though the local courts were not forbidden to exercise jurisdiction in similar cases. Commissioners were sent from Peking to investigate the affair.

Ho-Fi, and his wife, their domestics, Poo-Poo, and a few other persons who were required as witnesses, were summoned before the tribunal. Some of the relatives also of the former wives of the Yellow Girdle took care to be present in the court.

The case was fully examined. Minute evidence was entered into to prove that Ho-Fi had in various ways attempted the life of his lady; all the circumstances connected with their marriage were set forth by Poo-Poo; So-Sli gave her evidence with great perspicuity, and her statements respecting the poisoned tea and the fierce Bou-Wou, as well as concerning the viper in the bed, were corroborated by the testimony of the servants. Some

amateur witnesses made it pretty apparent that Ho-Fi's former wives had all of them been Burked and Greenacred; and the judges and jury were fully satisfied of his guilt. The defence did not shake their confidence, though it showed that faults of less magnitude existed in some other parties. The verdict of the court having been submitted to Peking, the following proclamation was in a few days received from the Emperor,—the Son of Heaven, and Father of the Celestial Empire. It was addressed to all his subjects—that is to say, to his three hundred and sixty-five millions of children.

"Peking; the sixth month; the fourteenth day; the fifty-eighth year of the Emperor Ho-Ho.

"Unless the laws be exercised even on the imperial kindred, they will not be obeyed.

"When the mulberry shall degenerate into the thorn, it is time that it should be rooted out.

"Guilt doth not escape the penetrating search of Ho-Ho. Ho-Ho hath long ears.

"Ho-Ho would emulate the virtues of his father, Ha-Ha, and train up by good example his son He-He.

"It hath come to the knowledge of Ho-Ho that a certain Yellow Girdle, named Ho-Fi, residing in the city of Din-Din, not respecting the imperial pleasure, so often proclaimed, that all shall live peaceably together without committing offences against their neighbours, hath contumaciously presumed to put six wives to death by various devices, and hath in like manner attempted the life of a seventh. The modes of their deaths have been these:—for each he accounted falsely. The first fell from a rock—he ascribed it to female giddiness: the second was drowned—he said that she died of drink: the third was hanged—he spoke of her tightness of breath: the fourth was poisoned—he declared she was not careful in diet: the fifth was starved—he said that she lived too low: the sixth was choked with her shoe—he gave out that she could not say herself how she died. By these evasions he for a while deluded justice: but the truth had become manifest; the chicken hath pipped the shell*; the cat can no

* "Eggs are close things, but chickens will out at last." A Chinese proverb, signifying that murder will out.—Davis.

longer conceal the kittens; the parrot hath moulted; let him be ashamed of his tail.

"But it is agreeable to the rules of justice that the punishment should bear some reference to the particular nature of the crime. This was the attempted murder of the seventh wife, which he hath essayed by poison, by a dog, and by a viper. It is the will, then, of Ho-Ho, that Ho-Fi be punished in this manner: that he be stung to death by adders, and that his heart be filled with poison, and given to the dog Bou-Wou. In consideration of his former enormities it is further ordered, that

his body be cut into exceeding small pieces, one of which shall be sent to every square *ly** throughout the empire, and stuck upon a thorn. That his ten nearest relatives be put to death also; but as it is well to temper justice with mercy, they shall be merely strangled. His wife So-Sli shall be strangled likewise. His servants shall submit each to two hundred strokes of the bamboo: Poo-Poo, the father of So-Sli shall receive five hundred, and shall wear the wooden collar for twelve calendar months, a proper reward for his heretical doctrines: the allowance of pay and rice to all Yellow Girdles shall cease for three years; and the principal mandarin of Din-Din shall be hung up in his house."

For "hung up in his house," some versions of the proclamation read "suspended in his office."

The wind up of this enunciation of the celestial will is too long for insertion here; it exhibits a fine struggle between a proper humility and conscious wisdom.

The story of Ho-Fi is told. Chinese and poetical justice go hand-in-hand. His name has long been universally execrated throughout the celestial empire. The Greeks borrowed it, and among them ὄφι was an expression equivalent to "O thou serpent!" Even among us barbarous inhabitants of the isles of the Western Ocean "O fye!" is to this day used to convey a reproach.

* A ly is a measure of distance about equal to our furlong.

# KUBLAI KHAN;

OR,

# THE SIEGE OF KINSAI.

Women young and women fair,
These be all the brave man's share.—DRY-DEN.

## INTRODUCTION.

I AM inclined to believe that the following story is a sort of psychological curiosity: that is to say, that it is no other than a poetical dream of the well-known Klang, the warrior bard.

There is internal evidence that this story is but "the stuff" of a dream, in its strange dislocation of historical facts. This, in a writer so remarkable for accuracy as the famous Klang, can only be accounted for on the above supposition. It is true that the royal city, Kinsai, was beset by the troops of the Khan, and that the Emperor fled, leaving the defence of the place to his Empress: it is true that she defended it with great valour: but history makes no mention, upon this occasion, of any regiment of ladies; though at an earlier period in the Chinese annals the Emperors Shih-hoo and Yang-te had troops of beautiful ladies as their body-guards. It can scarcely be necessary to observe that the adventure of the Khan, as related in the second and third cantos, is altogether fictitious. A medley of legends and historical facts must have been spinning round together in the brain,—in the stomach I should say,—in China the mind is seated in the stomach,*—in the stomach of the slumbering Klang: when these, not originally connected, accidentally arranged themselves in the sequence in which they are here presented to the reader.

* Chinese Miscellany.

## CANTO I.

I.

You've heard, no doubt, of Kublai Khan,
That terrible man
Who overran
The eastern world, in days of yore,
With steps of steel, in paths of gore?
Could there be brought together but all
The bones of those his armies slew,
They would vie in bulk with the China wall,
Or fill up the great canal of Yu.

II.

Kublai Khan was a terrible man,
A terrible Tartar was Kublai Khan;
His beard was yellow, his eyes were red,
And, hard as a crab's, stood out from his head,
They were eyes to pierce and eyes to harrow;
Those that he looked at would quake to their marrow;
The heart, when he frowned, would sink down in the belly,
And the voice of his anger made blood turn to jelly.

III.

He swore the Chinese realm should fall;
So he came at the head of his Tartar hordes,
Who all carried besoms as well as their swords,
And he pitched his tents before the wall.
As soon as the following morn had birth,
He led them along in their war array;
A part of the wall was formed of earth,
So they plied their besoms and swept it away.
Then Kublai Khan gave the word of command,
And they all poured into the Central Land.

IV.

What deeds were done is it need I say,
As on their course they wound?

What roofs were fired, what fields laid waste,
What armies slain, what hearths disgraced,
What lovely dames were borne away,
What plainer dames were drowned?
Oh! woe in the rear and death in the van
Were ever attendant on Kublai Khan.

V.

Fierce Kublai came to the Great Kinsai,
Where the Emperor dwelt, and his wives and kin,
In a beautiful palace, with rich inlay
Of gold without and of pearls within;
And with terrible groups of his Tartar troops
He blackened the hills and the plains around;
And he vowed a vow, that its towers should bow,
And its walls be scattered along the ground.

VI.

But when the Emperor saw
Proud Kublai's banners flaunting,
He was struck with amaze and awe,
And felt that his heart was wanting;
And slipping his ribs, so august and imperial,
Into a jacket of common material,
That none might suppose him a person of note,
He gat from the city by night in a boat.
But he left his queen and wives behind,
And bade them take good care
That the insolent Tartar hordes should find
A warm reception there.

VII.

Now it's fit you be told, that this Emperor bold,
Besides his Empress fair,
Had twenty wives, of properest lives,
As blythe and busy as bees in hives,
Endeavouring still
His hours to fill
With frolic and merriment fit to kill

The hollow-eyed phantom, Care.
There were An, and Nan, and Fan,
And Jin, and Din, and Sin, too,
With names that I neither can,
Nor would wish to enter into:
Monosyllable names of most killable dames,
Dames, I mean to say, able to kill us all;
So lovely and neat, and with such little feet,
As with awe and with wonder would fill us all.

VIII.

And again and besides these beautiful brides,
Who sat in due order at both of his sides,
Furthermore he possessed,
(So might count himself blessed,
More than any that dwelt in the East or the West,)
A regiment of ladies, all chosen and pick'd,
Whose hearts were brave, whose discipline strict,
All mounted on steeds of superior breeds,
And furnished with bows and brass-pointed reeds,
And swords ever ready for martial deeds;
Which loyal and beautiful band
Formed his guard, to watch and to ward
Treasons and dangers, from servants or strangers,
Lest any come near a person so dear
To all the loyal dames of the Central Land.

IX.

The Empress was colonel of this gallant troop,
And the wives were the majors, the captains, lieutenants,
And ensigns that bore the invincible pennants,
To which every foe,—
It seemed to be so,—
Was in gallantry bound to stoop.
So Sergeant Sling called over the names,
And the Empress harangued her regiment of dames;
Set out before them, in learned display,
The dangers that threatened the city Kinsai;

The myriads of Tartars
Prepared to be martyrs,
Rather than yield
An inch of the field,
Or move from the wall,
Till the town should fall.

X.

"So you see, my girls," said the beautiful colonel,
"We go forth in *strong* quest
Of difficult conquest:
Should they beat women the shame is infernal,
But, if they be beaten, our glory eternal.
So let us be drest
In our holiday best,
With silks of bright hues
All embroidered, for mails,
With the smallest of shoes,
And the longest of nails,
With patches of pink
On our lips and our cheeks,
And eye-brows of ink
Laid in delicate streaks,
With foong-hangs* rare,
Of jewels and gold,
Hanging down from our hair,
O'er our foreheads so fair;—
These charms, as I think,
And the swords we shall hold,
Will make the foe shrink,
Be they never so bold.

XI.

"Now, Major Slo, as your charger is fleet,
You shall lead the advance, when we go forth to meet
The foe in the field, and Major Van
Shall bring up the rear as well as she can.

* See note, F.

There is work for you, fair Captain Slae,
And for Captain Shi, so forward still;
For cast your glance o'er plain and hill,
We have many to capture and many to kill;
But let not numbers our hearts dismay,
We'll not be afraid of the foe or the fray."

XII.

Thus the Empress spoke to her female bands,
And the male troops also received her commands:
The male bands answered with warlike whoops,
But the hope of the town was the female troops.

## CANTO II.

I.

I do not say how the siege begun,
What works were tried, what deeds were done,
What engines used, what flags upborne,
What breaches made, what trowsers torn,
What throats were cut, what limbs were hack'd,
What bodies were crushed, what skulls were crack'd,
Because I don't know, and that's the fact.
But deeds of hand, and deeds of heart,
Valorous deeds upon either part,
Countless losses of lords and wives,
Countless losses of limbs and lives;
Walls in ruin, and silks in rags,
Terrible engines, flouting flags,
And all that belongs to a fearful fray,
You may understand without my say.
The walls though battered were not thro wn wn;
And the Empress yet retained the town.

II.

Oh, ne'er had a general yet been seen
In all Central Land,
Who in skill or in luck,
Or in plenty of pluck,

Was at all to compare
With that Empress so fair;
Nor there, as I ween, had a troop ever been,
That might vie with her beautiful band.
She gallantly held the great Kinsai,
And harassed the foe both night and day;
They scarce could remain in the neighbouring plain.
Nor were safe in the hills and the valleys;
For in her defence there was so much of sense,
And so much keen wit in her sallies.

III.

Let me declare it, if nobody knows,
Ladies are not such contemptible foes.
A thousand at once, and all of them chattering,
Mid horses' hoofs clattering, pattering, spattering,
Like tilters of Eglintoun all running at a ring,
Killing and scattering,
Bruising and battering,
Maiming and shattering,—
Not to be flattering,
Of primal confusion they teach you a smattering.

IV.

Daily were prisoners brought into the city,
Tied by their pigtails* together in pairs;
The handsome ones won on the Empress's pity,
The plain ones were hung in the crescents and squares.
She offered rewards for the heads of the lords,
And the commoners too of the Tartar hordes.
And her soldiers oft brought them by twos and by twos,
Slung over their shoulders so tied by their queues;*
Or, sometimes a lady with little remorse,
Arranged them in pairs o'er the neck of her horse.

* See note, G.

* See note, H.

v.

Now months had passed on in storming and sallying,
Fancy-phlebotomy, running and rallying;
In hurling stones,
And in throwing darts;
In breaking bones,
And in piercing hearts;
The troops of the Timour,
By hands and *by* knees,
Endeavouring to climb o'er,
The walls of the Chinese:
And the brave Chinese band,
Ensconced in snug quarters,
Hurling hot pitch and sand
On the heads of the Tartars:
Till the Tartars confessed, at least those in the thick of it,
That the siege of Kinsai, they were heartily sick of it:

And it made Kublai Khan very fierce and splenetic,
To find it thus act as a Tartar emetic.

VI.

So the terrible Kublai swore
That by storm he would take the city;
And wash the streets with the inmates' gore,
Without remorse or pity.
That lord nor page, that youth nor age,
Should meet with a moment's quarter:
But that proud Kinsai should be all laid low,
And the share of the plough should over it go,
To bury its bricks,
Its stones and sticks,
Its marble, mud and mortar.

VII.

As Kublai pronounced his decree so proudly,
His blood-hungry Tartars applauded him loudly;
They clattered their swords, they struck their gongs,
The air was griped with the crudest songs;
It was beaten with shouts and shattered with laughter,
And the echoes were ill for a month thereafter!
The broad river quaked as it rolled on its way,
And the red flags were wind-shaken over Kinsai.

VIII.

The Empress heard the clatter and jar,
As 'twas borne, by the breath of the breeze, from afar,
Like a peal of tipsy thunder;
So knowing that something must be in the wind,
With her beautiful lips she most wrathfully grinned;
She seized her silk buckler, her breastplate she pinned,
With a china-crape shawl doubled under;
In an elegant bow tied the string of her helmet,
And swore when the Tartars came they should be well met;
Then with eloquent speech to her ladies appealed,
And rode at the head of them forth to the field.

IX.

So on went the ladies till meeting the Tartars,
They poured forth upon them a volley of arrows,
As thick as small shot on a regiment of sparrows;
And then they turned round and made back to their quarters.

X.

The Khan greatly marvelled;
"Oh, none of them *are* veiled,"
Cried he, "and what beauties they are, every soul of them!
Draw not a bow—
Lay not one of them low;
For the moon and the sun,
I would not part with one;
But forward, my Tartars, and capture the whole of them.
Seize me alive every dear little beauty;
Yours is Kinsai if you do me this duty;
These shall alone be my share of the booty."

XI.

Then onward they all hurried, (O, for quick metre!)
The Tartars were fleet but the ladies were fleeter;
If those seemed to fly along, these seemed to shoot,
And they got to the city in spite of pursuit.

XII.

Now first in the chace was the amorous Khan,
Who distanced his troops two-thirds of a ly—
No thought from the moment the flight began
Had entered his brain,
Except to obtain
The prize upon which he had fixed his eye.
His passion and eagerness made him so blind
That he did not perceive how his troops fell behind;
And being well mounted,
He rode quite alone;
And recklessly counted
The quarry his own,

As he dashed through the gate
Very proud and elate.
But he found his mistake in another half minute,
When the guards closed the portal and closed him within it.
Then the ladies came back very joyous and gay,
And the Khan was their prisoner there in Kinsai.

## CANTO III.

I.

The Empress sat on the Emperor's throne,
And the Emperor's sceptre swayed;
She had slipped on his trowsers, too, over her own,
And she gave her commands in the despot's tone:
And every vassal
Within the castle
Her delegate voice obeyed.
Oh! a delicate voice was her delegate voice,
And every one made it a matter of choice
To do her behest as soon as 'twas spoken,
With an eagerness owing
In part to his knowing
That else every one of his bones would be broken,
Say nought of his being flayed.

II.

The Empress sat on the Emperor's throne,
And sent six ladies the Khan to call;
"For tell him," said she, "I've a bit of a bone
I would pick with him here in my audience hall."
The Khan was pleased when he heard that say,
For he'd tasted nothing since break of day.
A pleasant look on the dames he threw,
And shook the dust from his beard and queue;
He looped his belt, but he would not strap it tight
Since dinner was ready, and so was his appetite;
And he went to the chamber to find the bone:
But when he came there

The table was bare,
And so the poor Khan had none.

III.

He strode through the room, nowise forlorn,
His step was bold and free;
Although he was not in America born,
Yet a-merry-Khan was he.
Round his ankles and waist and neck he bore
Chain-cable enough for a seventy four;
Yet proudly he paced along:
And as all such Eastern heroes do
When they find themselves in a bit of a stew,
To keep up his pluck,
In spite of ill luck,
Consoled himself with song.

IV.

But whilst the Khan in his fetters,
Marched up the hall with pride,
Where the ladies, who proved his betters,
Were ranged upon either side;
If his little red eyes stood out from his head,
It was not with rage, it was not with dread,
It was not with hate, it was not with scorn,
It was only with joy and a large surprise
At the beautiful sight, such as since he was born
Had never before met his little red eyes;
And he smiled as he glanced, with his eyes full of flames,
At beautiful Empress and beautiful dames.

V.

The Empress so bold and her ladies so fair
Were exceedingly taken with Kublai Khan;
They liked his person, they liked his air,
And to tell it in brief, they liked the man.
His jaws were wide, his forehead narrow,
He seemed a person of pith and marrow;
And with eyes so red and beard so yellow,
They thought him a very delectable fellow.

VI.

Yet the Empress thought it fit and right
To look very grave at the Tartar knight,
Because, by and by, by way of a finis,
She purposed to hang his Tartar highness.
She meant he should hang, his neck reposing
In a silken twist of her own composing:
And so she considered the way to behave,
Would be, for the present, to look very grave.

VIII.

"Kublai Khan," the Empress said,
In a very impressive and solemn manner,
"Over our fertile land you've sped
With bloody sword and flouting banner:
You have seized our maidens, you've slaughtered our youth,
You have cut off the heads of our aged sires,
You've spoiled our cities and fields with fires;
Nor infants in arms could move ye to ruth:
You have poisoned our rivers, and drained our vats,
And made short work of our rice and rats.
The punishment then the law requires
Is burning to death with red-hot wires;
But since you are brave, we all agree
Only to hang you on yonder tree.
Is there anything, Khan, you can urge, of force
To hinder the law in its simple course?

VIII.

Kublai Khan he stroked his beard,
And said very quietly "Who's afeard?"
He swelled up his cheek before he would speak,
And scratched his nose, so knowing and sleek.
To seem at his ease he made an endeavour,
But felt Kinsai was a comical place;
His eyes looked redder and harder than ever,
And stood rather further out from his face.
His case was queer; however 'twas good
To put the best face on it he could;

Nor had he just then a better at hand
  Than that with his two little hard red eyes,
And a thick long beard, so yellow and grand,
  Which gave him a look very fierce and wise.

IX.

"Dear lady,"—at last he thus began,
  And seemed by his smile to be free from fear,—
"We oftentimes put the beer in a can,
  But I see you're for putting the Khan in a bier.
You must do as you please, most lovely flower,
For Kublai Khan is in your power.
    It was rather unwise
    To be caught by those eyes,
So green in their hue, and so small in their size;
    No doubt on't:—but there—
    I fell into the snare,
And it's often our lot to be killed by the fair;
    So,—thus in Kinsai,—
    I have only to say
That if you adjudge me death my due,
I am proud, dear lady, to die for you:
But an' if you had not so fierce a will,
To live for you I'd be prouder still.

X.

"That I've wasted your fields and towns with fires,
  And filled your streams with a sanguine die,
That I've cut the throats of your youths and sires,
  And eaten your rats, I can't deny:
But never, believe it, most beautiful elf,
Would Kublai Khan hurt such as yourself."

XI.

Now how could it be but the Empress fair,
  Now how could it be but her ladies bright,
Now how could it be but each one there,
  Should be touched at these words of the Tartar knight?
So they talked for a while in an under-breath,

And to do what they could
For his comfort and good,
Agreed to accord him his choice of a death.
Whether to die by maiming and mangling,
Drowning, burning, or choking and dangling.
And when the Khan bold answer made,
And honestly owned that, if he might,
(Since fighting e'er had been his trade,)
He'd rather prefer to fall in fight,—
The ladies acceded to this proposition,
And chosing three heroes of noble condition,
To slaughter Khan Kublai, they gave them commission.

XII.

These heroes were tall and terrible chaps,
Of warlike fame untarnished;
Two peacock's feathers in each of their caps,
And their helms were of pastebord varnished;
Their shoulder-guards and breast-plates fair
Were made of cotton and stuffed with hair;
Their steps were fleet, and their arms were strong,
Their eyes were fierce, and their beards were long;
And each, besides a bow and a mace,
Carried a terrible silken shield,
Pictured whereon was a hideous face,
To fright the foeman out of the field.
Each at his back a banneret bore;
Through a hollow bamboo its staff was thrust:
And of two placards, behind and before,
*That* called him "Brave" and *this* "Robust."*

XIII.

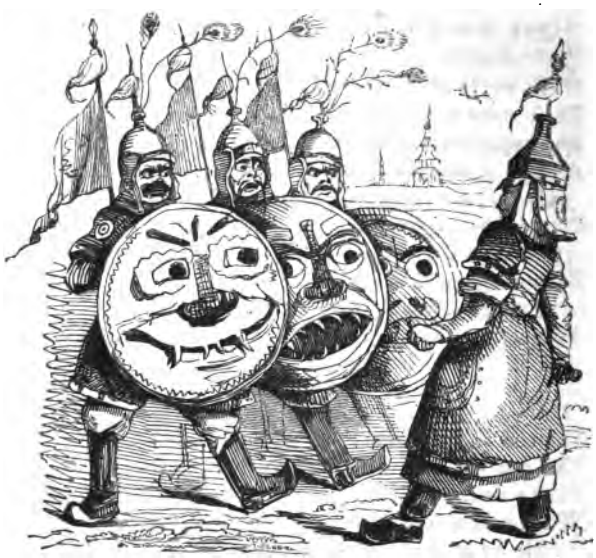
The chosen ground was the palace lawn;
The fence was framed, and the swords were drawn:
The three from the East, the Khan from the West,
To meet in the middle their steps addressed.
Side by side advanced the three,
All heroes of one stamp;

* See note, I.

Side by side, and knee by knee,
With very deliberate tramp.
When they almost met their Tartar foe,
Who towards them came at swifter pace,
They stopped at once in a fearful row,
And held their shields out towards his face;
Then working secret wires within,
Made the terrible faces squint and grin;
And they trusted by this decisive plan
To frighten away the Tartar Khan.

XIV.

But lo! and behold! the Tartar Khan
Was not prepared to take the hint;
He looked at the shields, that fearless man!
And "Ho!" said he, "you may grin and squint!"



Then in both his hands his sword raised he,
To shatter the shields of the warlike three.

This showed a heart on the Tartar's part,
For which the three were not prepared:
They stepped in a crack some paces back,
And opened their mouths and eyes, and stared,
"Why stay we here?" cried valiant Fli,
"Oh, fly we hence!" cried dauntless Flee,
And in mighty dismay
Shun-Fo ran away;
I know not which might soonest hie,
Or which was the fleetest of all the three.

XV.

Their flags were all to ribands torn
By the current of air, so fast their flight;
The peacock plumes from their caps were borne,
And they showed no feather except the white.
And as they ran the bold placard
That proclaimed them "brave" was their shield and guard.
Their flight had turned it towards the Khan,
Who never perceived they were brave till they ran.

XVI.

The Tartar bold pursued their flight,
And cleft them down from crown to heel;
And his eyes gleamed bright with his grim delight
As then on his queue he wiped the steel.
He bowed to the Queen and her ladies fair;
His face was flecked with spirts of gore:
"We'll leave these three to the doctor's care,
And now, sweet Queen, I am ready for more."

XVII.

Three more were brought, and he slaughtered them,
And then came five and those he slew;
As you with a knife cut a flowret's stem,
As easily he chopped men in two.
Then seven, and nine, came against him all;
He hacked the whole of them limb from limb:
And dwarfs so strong, and giants so tall;
But giants and dwarfs were alike to him.

The blood of his foes dripped down from his nose,
And made his beard in a gory trim;
And at every blow, as he killed a foe,
He bowed to the ladies and smiled so grim.

XVIII.

Then the sons and sires, the brothers and cousins
Of those sweet ladies came into the lists,
And he slaughtered them all by tens and dozens;
You'd think that the work would have sprained his wrists.
But Kublai Khan was stout and willing,
And not to be easily tired of killing:
He cut off their heads spare time to amuse,
And roped them, like onions, up by their queues.

XIX.

When the Queen and her troop of China-roses
Beheld the fate of their lords and masters,
Those stars of fight, those China-asters,
Thus snipped by the Khan and bound in posies,
They were filled with a measureless admiration
Of the terrible chief of the Tartar nation.
And the Empress spake and said, "O Khan,
Since you've shown yourself such a valorous man,
And slain the prime of our warriors thus,
You will not be afraid of a match with us.
So whet you your sword on the edge of your shield,
Till I and my ladies come into the field."

XX.

Kublai bowed with infinite grace,
Smiled in a very bewitching way,
Wiped the blood from off his face,
And made reply to the Empress gay:
"O lady bold, O lady bright,
To slaughter men I have little care;
Send more of such if you think it right:
But I draw not sword on dames so fair.
A match with you and your ladies sweet,

Is what would make my bliss complete;
But that which thus would sweeten life
Is a match in love and not in strife."

XXI.

The Queen and her beautiful ladies laughed;
Should the Khan be killed they would all be sorrier:
They ever had loved the warrior-craft,
And it made them love the crafty warrior.
They whispered some blame of the Emperor's flight,
And declared that that ought to have kindled their spite:
So the Empress bowed low, with most lady-like ease,
And answered, "Brave Khan, be it just as you please."

XXII.

Then he danced them by fours, by tens, and by scores,
Over charcoal pots that were set at the doors;
The town of Kinsai was full of delight:
Oh! a wonderful man was the Tartar Khan,
And he conquered in love whom he couldn't in fight.

# FASHIONS IN FEET;

OR,

## THE TALE OF THE BEAUTIFUL TO-TO.*

Now beat the drum and clatter the gong,
And let us upraise our voices strong,
And tell it aloud with music and song,
What praise may well to our dames belong,—
That they're sure to go right if they can't go wrong.—YA-HOO.

IF any of our lovely country-women should meet a Chinese lady, they would deem her lot unblessed:—at least, the first idea that would occur to them would be, that they would not stand in her shoes.

The Chinese ladies do not understand "long measure:" at all events their table is peculiar, as they have but three inches to a foot. A curious fact in their anatomy is that their toes are bent, and twenty in number, being *doubled* under the sole; thus even though their feet move forward, their toes go backwards.

They are extremely contentious: they cannot meet without scuffling. Their walk is uneasy—they seem to move with pain; and how should it be otherwise when nails are under their feet?

Yet, though feet so diminutive are at present, and have been for many centuries worn by the celestial ladies, this was not always the case. A French postilion has been described as all boots: the sage Ya-hoo, whom we have quoted at the head of this story, spoke of the softer sex in his time as *all slippers;* yet

* There is little known of Shoo, the original author of this historical romance, but that he wrote a poetical treatise on Boot-making, in measures of [illegible] feet each. If an inference may be drawn from the title of his work, he [illegible]ave ventured but ankle-deep into the waters of the Sing-Slo, the Chinese

it is true that even this expression seems to set them upon a bad footing.

Their feet were not always so small. You shall find in Chinese histories that the Emperor Min-Te, who came to the throne in the thirty-first year of the sixty-first cycle,* had a beautiful Empress, To-To, whose feet in length rejoiced in their complement of exactly twelve inches. The Emperor loved his lady with imperial measure of attachment; indeed he regarded her single self with more affection than he entertained besides for any two of his handmaidens; and he would seldom absent himself from her society except when it was necessary for him to give audience,—that is, to smoke a quiet hooka in presence of his ministers,—in the celestial council chamber. The custom of the country rendered it impossible that To-To should attend

* A.D. 934.

him there; but when the formal conference was over, he would frequently detain his favourite minister, Hum, in whose character and wisdom he had great confidence, and retiring to a more snug apartment, would invite his Empress to join them in a cosy pipe. On such occasions state business was sometimes a second time discussed; and the decisions of the lesser council often annulled and superseded those of the greater.

Min-Te was a lazy monarch, and was well pleased to have all troublesome questions of policy or justice arranged in a quiet manner, without his intervention: he did not like to be obliged to decide between the conflicting opinions of different ministers; but in these agreeable little after-councils, strange to say, though a lady was allowed a voice in them, there was always unanimity, and seldom a very lavish expenditure of words. No wonder that Min-Te should value a minister whose simple eloquence, and of course great argumentative powers, sufficed at once, upon whatever subject they were exercised, to carry conviction even to an Empress. To testify his great esteem for Hum, he ordered that he should be lodged in the palace, in chambers not far distant for the imperial apartments. He frequently employed him to instil into the lovely To-To a proper sense of all the duties she should aim at fulfilling as a woman and a wife; but above all, as the chosen lady of the Emperor.

The beautiful Empress received meekly and graciously the lessons of virtue thus imparted to her. Nothing, to her apprehension, could be more agreeable than the counsels given by Hum. The Emperor, looking on at a little distance, was overjoyed at seeing with how much attention she listened to the instructions of so excellent an adviser; and when at other times he heard her discourse of virtue and the duties of wifehood, "This is all Hum," thought he. Thus she gained still more of his affection, and Hum of his esteem; and the fame of both went abroad throughout all the celestial dominions. When Hum appeared in the streets the people flocked about him. "A Hum! a Hum!" they cried, "the Emperor's favored counsellor. Three cheers for a Hum!" Then they shouted aloud, and no sound could be heard except "A Hum!"

The Emperor was a sound sleeper; that is to say, he could sleep in spite of a sound. It is strange that a *sound* sleeper

and a *quiet* sleeper should be nearly synonymous expressions; not quite, indeed, for one who snores may be a sound sleeper. The Empress was a sound sleeper also; a very determined sleeper; for she was addicted to somnambulism, and somnambulists must be very determined sleepers.

From being himself such a decided somnambulist, it was some time before the Emperor became aware of his lady's peculiarity. A little whisper, however,—no bigger than a musquito, which had for several days been fluttering about the palace, and buzzing into people's ears, one morning came dancing about his;

and having awhile piped into it in a very small voice, gave it a sting which caused considerable irritation, then flew out at the window, and in a short time had treated every mother's son, and no less father's daughter, throughout the celestial dominions, in nearly the same way.

That little provoking noise kept ringing in his imperial music-box, and the smart continued, so that his majesty at night was quite unable to sleep; but, in the hope, no doubt, of bringing the customary drowsy influence upon him, he lay quite still, (by his lady's side,) and breathed hard, as though he had been in slumber.

He fell, by and by, into a sort of half-doze, a dreamy mood, in which the little tune of the small whisper seemed to split into two parts; the one consisted of a number of minikin figures made up of queer bars very strangely put together, which kept dancing about his closed eyes; the other still sounded in his ear, but its members assumed an articulate character, and the sounds and the figures mutually interpreted each other; whilst the tune was still discernible in the words, and the motions of the characters kept time to it. This was the song:—

Min-Te, Min-Te, Min-Te,
Oh Emperer bold and free!
Do as bid,
Open your lid,
You'd better be wise and see.
With a chee, chee, cheee, chee, chee, chee, chee.*
Lest it betide (chee, chee,)
That your wife should creep (chee, chee,)
Away from your side (chee, chee,)
For she walks in her sleep (chee, chee).
With a chee, chee, chee, chee, cheeee, cheee, chee,
And a chee, chee, cheeee, cheee, cheee, chee, cheeeeeeee.

Min-Te, Min-Te, Min-Te,
Lend the loan of your lug to me!
I'd have you be wise,
And open your eyes,
And see what you shall see.
With a chee, chee, chee, chee, cheee, cheee, chee.
There's Hum in his bed (chee, chee,)
At the end of the gallery, (chee, chee,)

* I believe it is either Captain Marryat or Captain Basil Hall who has given a specimen of the Mosquito language very closely resembling this.

Best cut off his head, (chee, chee,)
Or at least his salary (chee).
With a cheee, chee, chee, chee, cheee, cheee, chee,
And a cheee, chee, chee, chee, cheee, cheee, cheeeeee.

And so the song was proceeding, like the moon, all made of *cheese*, when his imperial majesty (who lay *dos-à-dos* with his wife, for the greater convenience of dozing a doze) was suddenly aroused to full consciousness by a gentle pull of the silken cover-lid. He lay quite quiet (though a gnat at the moment settled on his nose), and soon perceived that the Empress was getting out of bed in her sleep, and evidently taking the greatest possible care not to awaken herself in so doing. Having no doubt at all —none whatever—not the slightest in the world—not the least possible—that she was altogether unconscious of what she was about, he thought, like a kind Emperor, that it would be right she should be looked to, lest she should break her neck down the stairs or out of window, the palace being two stories high; and, as he discovered that she moved towards the door, he rose from bed as quietly as she had done, and followed; she all the while treading as noiselessly as though she were a fly, and he as though he were a spider.

She proceeded along the gallery, and passed the stairs without accident; and she had arrived almost at the bottom of the corridor, when the Emperor, alarmed lest she might make a false step (a fox-paw, as the French express it), seized her by throwing his left arm round her waist; at the same moment placing his right hand over her mouth, to prevent that natural utterance of alarm which might be expected from a lady suddenly awakened under such circumstances. Startled she was, and she certainly *would* have screamed, had it not been for his precaution. Being quite in the dark, both as to where she was, and as to who had laid such violent hand upon her, you may imagine how greatly she was frightened. She struggled to get loose, though still without making much noise; indeed she thought that it would not be amiss if she could get back to her chamber as quietly as she came thence. But this was not to be; for the prime minister Hum, who, with what truth I cannot pretend to say, had the reputation of being at all times wide awake, was not asleep up-

the present occasion; and hearing, with his pair of very acute ears, a little scuffling in the gallery, he opened the door of his apartment, which was close to the scene of action. He had apparently been deeply engaged in study, for he held in his hand a lighted lantern, the light of which he now directed upon the pair in the corridor. The instant he saw them, however, it dropped from his hand; and closing and fastening the door with all possible celerity, he jumped upon his bed, coiled himself into a circle less than his waist in diameter, drew the clothes over him in a heap, and lay without moving, breathing, or letting his beard grow, till the morning light had filled his apartment.

During the moment that a gleam from the lantern had been thrown upon them, To-To became aware that it was only the Emperor who had frightened her so much in the dark; and of course much delighted at this discovery, and her fears all banished thereby, she immediately returned to the imperial apartment.

"My dearest To-To," said his imperial majesty as they entered, "I was not till now aware that you were a somnambulist. Why did you never mention to me that you were so afflicted? I would have had a gold collar made to surround your ankle, and a chain and lock to secure you to the bed. I myself would have kept the key, so dearly do I tender your safety."

"I had hoped," she replied, "that my attachment to your sacred majesty would have always have exercised the counteracting influence which it has hitherto done, and have overcome entirely the infirmity to which I was formerly subject. I have no fear of another attack, and I think the gold chain therefore will be quite unnecessary."

"As, however, you are restless to-night," said the Emperor, "I will secure you for the present with this strap. Stay, let me pass it round you. There, that will do—nay, one pull more—uh, uh—you can't move now, I think. That's just the thing—the lock is famous—so—and here goes the key. Don't be afraid; you can't roll down. And now, as I'm rather of the sleepiest, good night, dearest madam. Indeed this sleep-walking is a terrible thing; but we'll say no more about that till the morning."

He had scarcely finished speaking before he was fast asleep;

but poor To-To could not get to sleep at all, for she was almost cut in two by the strap he had fastened round her.

In the morning the Emperor liberated his wife; but he did not revert to the subject of sleep-walking till after he had finished his morning devotions and meal.

He sent for her then; and when she came into his presence he asked if she remembered the circumstances of the preceding night. She confessed that she had some confused recollection of a dream, in which she had imagined that, after her beloved lord had been a long time absent from her, whilst pining for his return, she suddenly beheld him walking towards her, at a distance in the garden; and that in the affection of her heart she had gone forth to meet him, and to welcome him home. She was, accordingly, hastening down the long walk, when a black dragon flew out of the canal by which it was bordered, and coiled suddenly around her. That she was mortally frightened thereat, and, with the greatest presence of mind, resolved on the instant to utter a loud scream; but that the black dragon put one of its terrible paws upon her mouth, and prevented this. On partially awakening about that time, what was her satisfaction at discovering that the black dragon was no other than the Emperor himself.

Her compassionate lord endeavoured to console her with the suggestion that some remedy might possibly be found for this unfortunate habit; and he questioned her as to whether there was any manner in which she could at all account for her being thus afflicted. In answer to this, she expressed a suspicion that her mamma had been partly concerned; and she told some long story to substantiate this view: but that I consider little worthy our attention, as she made the facts a few weeks older than herself, and might therefore be supposed to know but little of the matter. She afterwards, however, put the thing in a more philosophical light, when she said, that her habits being sedentary and her feet large, the latter, she thought had not a proper proportion of exercise during the day; and thus made up secretly for the deficiency at night, when they knew that she was sleeping, and unable consequently to keep a look out upon their motions.

Now here let it be mentioned that large feet in the days of

Min-Te were as necessary to the ideal of female loveliness throughout the celestial dominions, as small feet have been ever since; and that Min-Te himself had chosed the delectable To-To as the wife of his bosom chiefly on account of her felicities in that department of the beautiful. Nevertheless, when his lady declared her conviction that with premeditation those her lovely members walked away with her in such an inexcusable manner, he could not restrain himself from uttering a malediction against them. This malediction was expressed in three words; but the nib of my pen turns this way and that and refuses to write the first: "their soles" were the other two.

Min-Te then informed his lady that it had come to his knowledge that though he doubted not she was quite unconscious of the fact, the little excursion she had taken the past night was by no means the first she had made in the same direction; and he considered that if she walked at all that was the wrong way, and this he disapproved *in To-To*.

But To-To expressed great satisfaction at hearing this, as she said that actions done in sleep always went by a rule of contrary, and that her walking the wrong way in a dream was the most lucid of all possible proofs that her ways were always correct in her waking hours.

Could the Emperor do otherwise than bow to the force of such argument? He highly applauded his lady and assured her of his perfect confidence in her waking excellence. Yet he confessed that his strong conviction of this was in itself a source of disquiet to his mind; for she had clearly demonstrated that it would be the occasion of her always going wrong in sleep. It was his wish, if possible, that this might be avoided; and the only mode which occurred to him of escaping from the dilemma was to prevent her from going at all. How to effect this? He wished heartily that her feet had not grown since infancy, as she then would not have taken to sleep-walking; but they *had*, and what was to be done? Min-Te was an inventive genius; he hit upon an admirable plan: he sent for a cook and a cleaver and had these offending members chopped six inches shorter. The cure was complete; it is confidently stated that To-To never more walked in her sleep; and I recommend all somnambulists to try the efficiency of Min-Te's invention.

The Emperor next wished a private conference with his prime minister. Hum had not yet arisen, and the messengers had to seek him in his chamber. They found him nearly in the attitude in which he lay when we wished him good night; but when they endeavoured to arouse him, they discovered that he had choked himself by swallowing his pigtail.

A proclamation went abroad throughout the empire, that the most honoured and exemplary Empress, the lantern of beauty and steel-yard of ceremony, had set the fashion of short feet; and though it was not absolutely required that all the ladies of the land should conform to this *mode*, it was made imperative on all parents to wrap up the feet of their female children in such ligatures of cotton, silk, leather, or brass, as should effectually prevent the future growth of the pedal bones and ligaments, the toes being bent inwards towards the sole; "for," said the edict, "as the toes of women have a natural bias to go wrong, it is proper that they should be turned the opposite way."

The name of the Empress,—To-To signifying "Long-Foot,"—had become inapplicable; nor could it be desirable for an imperial lady, when length of foot had ceased to be among the elements of female beauty: the Emperor therefore changed it to Fo-Paw, which may be Englished as "One who walks the wrong way."

Min-Te and Fo-Paw thenceforth lived ever happily*. The wisdom of Min-Te is much spoken of in this day, and he is accounted one of the greatest benefactors of his country; for the Chinese are of opinion that their wives have walked much more steadily since they lost the use of their feet.

* This is perhaps the less remarkable as the whole reign of the Ten-Thousand-Years,—such is one of the titles of the Emperors of China,—did not extend beyond twelve calendar months.

# HYSON AND BOHEA.

"Of the love that upsprung
In the fair and the young,
Let the sorrows be sung,
By most musical Tung."—TUNG.

## INTRODUCTION.

"THE Tea-Tree," of Tee-to-Tum, is the most celebrated of all Chinese didactic poems, and is one of those great and elaborate works to the production of which the labour of a life is necessary. The story of Hyson and Bohea, of which the following must be looked upon as somewhat a free translation, may be considered as perhaps the most pathetic of its episodes.

Tee-to-Tum did not misemploy his genius, and his toil was not ill rewarded; for "The Tea-Tree" may be considered the great national poem of the Chinese.

The history of Tee-to-Tum is somewhat remarkable. It is related that he was cradled in a tea-chest, and that tea not only formed his earliest diet, but that through life he took no other nourishment. He lived in a retired tea-garden in the district of Sing-te; his house and furniture were formed of tea-wood, and the dry branches of tea-trees served him as fuel. He lived to a green old age, and his death was occasioned by an accident similar to that which terminated the days of Anacreon, only that the Chinese poet was choked, not by a grape-stone but a tea-stalk.

His poem is very voluminous, being divided into two hundred books, or, as he calls them, branches. Each branch comprises full a thousand "leaves;" not indeed leaves of two pages each; but the single verses of Tee-to-tum are called "tea-leaves" by the people of the Celestial Land. His industry was remarkable: not a day passed without his adding to or correcting his poem.

"TE veniente die, TE decedente canebat."

Pour forth, O Muse!* thine influence let me win!
O let me draw thee! let me drink thee in!
Warm thou my tongue with spirit clear and strong,
And from thy kettle breathe the steam of song:
Gently uplift thy dewy lid and see
The fancied forms of Hyson and Bohea;
Imbue my lips their mournful fates to tell,
Whilst flow hot streams for two that loved so well.

Love, wondrous smith! who fashions chains from looks,
And from mere eyes can form both eyes and hooks,
Had linked their hearts the hour that first they met,
Had linked their hearts with links that bound them yet.
In lonely glen their constant love began,
And, first by chance, oft since they met by plan.

In sooth they were a goodly pair to see:
Hyson was fat, and beauteous was Bohea:
And none in all the province could compare
With the sleek Hyson, or Bohea the fair.
Both born and bred away from city's scene,
Though town-bred youth might call young Hyson *green*,
Though town-bred dames with scornful eyes might see,
And dub his country love, "poor, weak, Bohea,"
Enough for them the charms within their reach,
Enough for them that each was loved by each.

Yet 'neath some evil star their love arose:
Though they were dearest friends their sires were foes.
The cause of *their* dear friendship is not hidden—
Both young, both comely, and their love forbidden:
The cause their *sires* were foes is still more plain—
Both had one trade, and both lived in one lane.
One village-lane some *ly* from Nanking's walling;
And manufacturing porcelain was their calling:
Both shone in that like two superior stars,
And so between them they had many *jars*.

* The Muse of Tea, whom the poet invokes at intervals throughout his poem, and whom we have invoked at the commencement of this volume.

Old age and youth!—oh! *that* is formed for strife,
This—*this* for love, the bird's-nest-soup of life!*
And should the truth before those sires be set,
How well their children loved, how oft they met,
Not locusts, dragons, Tartars could compare
With the fierce wrath of that grey-pigtail'd pair.

But with a cautious care the maid and spark
Deceived their sires, and kept them in the dark;
Made assignations with a code of signs;
Oft met by moonlight among groves and vines.

The days pass'd on,—the nights flew likewise by;—
Weeks past, and months: and still they met to sigh
And dream of bliss. Young Hyson! fond Bohea!
In vain ye dream of bliss that must not be.

One night,—that gloomy night no bat† would flit,
But crows around flew late and oft alit,
And winds breathed loud in melancholy wail,—
A treacherous friend had told their tender tale.
A treacherous friend, to whom Bohea confessed
With too fond trust the secrets of her breast,—
Though bound to silence by the holiest oath,
That friend, *too* treacherous, had betray'd them both;
Told more, much more than need the muse repeat,
And where they met, and where they next should meet.
Bohea had told *her* all, and told her true:
Bohea knew not that friend loved Hyson too.

Unwise Bohea! your error now is learn'd;
Too soon committed, and too late discern'd;
Too soon you trusted, and too late you vex:
Yet not in you the fault, but in your sex.
Each fair one of some secret thus possest,
Whilst all the charge is hers, can take no rest;
So, prizing it more dearly than her peepers,
To make it safer, finds it several keepers.

* See note, K. † See note, L.

That night, that gloomy night, that night of mist,
Bohea and Hyson sought their place of tryst:
Bowered with green leaves, and far from haunts of men,
That place of tryst was no *trist* place till then.

They rushed to meet,—they almost met; delight
Was in their looks. How was't they met not quite?
What was't that check'd their speed at once and joy,
And made them pause,—that maiden and her boy?

For such effect cause strong and good was there:
One hand had grasped Bohea by her long hair,
And kept her from her love,—the fond, the true:
And one stern fist held Hyson by the queue.
Their bliss was balk'd, their hearts were fill'd with doubt,
Their heads were hurt, and both shriek'd loudly out!

Yes, 'twas their sires: their sires had heard their tale
From that false friend,—and both with rage turn'd pale:
But both resolved to learn the story's truth,
Ere one condemned the maid, or one the youth.
With this intent they both had sought that spot:
Oh, fair Bohea's and Hyson's evil lot!
Just ere they met,—alas, too faithful pair!
Those two sprang forth, and seized them by the hair.
By hers Bohea's stern father dragged her home,
And question'd as they went how dared she roam
To meet young sparks by moonlight in a glen,
And why *that* youth, of all the race of men?
Arrived at home, he tied her to a post
By those sweet locks young Hyson prized the most:
Removed her scissors from the unhappy fair,
And bound her hands, lest these unbind her hair;
Withheld her rice and pipe, and barr'd her door,
Until she vow'd she ne'er would do so more.

And Hyson's father let not him go free,
But brought him home, and strapp'd him to a tree
By his long queue,—ah me, that it would moult!
For, fasten'd by that lock, he could not bolt.

Then as a thresher whirls round in a trice
The ponderous flail * and thrashes out the rice,
So, whirling round his head a stout bamboo,
He thrash'd his son: his son who dared to woo.
The youth, when 'gainst his ears he felt the cane,
(Against his *ears* was much against the *grain*,)
Shriek'd out an oath he'd never do't again.

That self-same night, when all were lock'd in sleep,
The sad Bohea, who stay'd awake to weep,
Rose from her couch, and lest her shoes might klop,
"Padded the hoof" and sought her father's shop.
High in the midst a tea-pot huge was placed,
Of finest porcelain and superior taste;
In forming which it was her sire's fond aim
To win at once more custom and more fame.

* See note, M.

So water-pots, and boots of giant size
Oft hang from shops to attract the passer's eyes.
To turn it to some use, besides mere show,
Just at this time he made it a depôt
For certain tea, some four-and-twenty lbs.
Dried by himself—the produce of his grounds.
There came Bohea, the beautiful! the sweet!
And standing on the tips of her small feet,
Scarce knowing what to do or how begin,—
She lifted up the cover, and look'd in.

Then went she thence,—she was her father's daughter,—
And, one by one, fetch'd several pails of water,
And emptied in;—but slow the liquid rose,
And soon she brought this labour to a close.
"Oh! vain," she cried, "with destiny to cope!
This tea-pot, too, was formed to balk my hope.
At such a rate as this, oh! Fortune's spite!
I scarce should fill it should I toil all night.
I hoped in this to bid my sorrows flee;
But fate forbids. Unfortunate Bohea!"

She clasp'd her fair hands like some stage adept,
Lean'd on the porcelain, raised her eyes and wept.
The tears went down her cheeks in such array
As floods roll down when river-banks give way.
Oh! joy, Bohea! thy woes shall find their bar:
Those tears in quick streams gush'd into the jar:
So hot they fell, so large, and fast, and free,
They fill'd the porcelain pot,—and made the tea.
"Is't true?" she cried. "Then Fo hath heard my prayer—
Come back, sweet Hope! and hence, far hence, Despair!
If but my act shall prompt the youth I love,
Though parted here, we soon may meet above.*
So now of friends and foes I take my leave,
And drown myself to make my father grieve."

She climb'd a chair beside the tea-pot's brim;
She plunged—she sank—alas! she could not swim.

* See note, N.

White gleam'd her robes amid the watery gleam—
The steam arose—her breath rose with the steam.
No corks were there, no bladders, and no stick;
Three times she kick'd, and then she ceased to kick:
Strong was the tea-pot, and in vain she struck it,
And her last kick kick'd that, and kick'd the bucket.
As leaves of tea, long twisted and curl'd up,
Swell and unrol in tea-pot or in cup,—
Though downward bent her toes had long perforce lain,
She turn'd them up in that sad piece of porcelain.

Perchance this tale improbable appears;
Yet think how often maids are drown'd in tears.
Then deem it true, and weep for poor Bohea,—
First drown'd in tears,—then both in tears and tea.

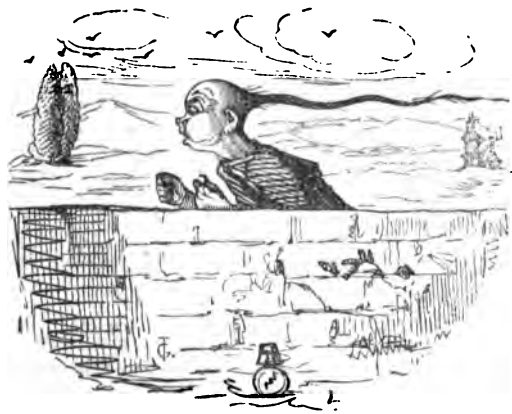
Young Hyson heard—for ill news travels fast—
Young Hyson heard—young Hyson stood aghast.
He swore, he raved, he stamp'd, he tore his hair,—
That one long lock,—he scream'd,—he cursed the chair
That help'd her up,—he cursed his evil lot—
He curs'd the tea, he also cursed its pot.
He strove to weep,—but strove to weep in vain,—
There seem'd to glow hot lava in his brain,
Volcano fires before his eyes to start,
And more than earthquake to convulse his heart.
He strove to speak—but, oh! no voice would come;
He strove again—his words were "Ha" and "Hum."
Once more he strove;—at last the fetters broke
That bound his speech,—he strove to speak,—and spoke:—

"Oh! thou white lump of sugar!* thrown too soon
To sweeten tea—(ah! would I were thy spoon!)—
Thou for whose sake my grief must ever keep hot,
Why didst thou fall in that detested tea-pot?
Alas! no power may bring her back to life,
Who was my love, who should have been my wife—

* This metaphorical apostrophe, which occurs in the original of Tee-to-Tum, is the more remarkable, as the Chinese are not in the habit of taking sugar in their tea.

Away with words, with life—in brief, with *breath*—
Nought now is left worth living for, save death!
Though foes should gladden, and though friends should
weep,
If fires be hot, knives sharp, or opium cheap,
If wolves be fierce, wells deep, or girdles strong,
Then farewell, life!—thou shalt not hold me long."

Thus spoke the youth: then rose from where he sat,
And rush'd away—the wind bore off his hat,—
He heeded not—he rush'd, and on the wind
His clothes flew out, his pigtail stream'd behind:—



Long, black, and fluttering with his speed it stream'd,
And head and pigtail some huge tadpole seem'd,
Or comet grim, dread portent of the skies,—
Its tail the pigtail, and its light his eyes.

Thus on he flew, and did not turn, or stop,
Or pause, till, lo! he reach'd a blacksmith's shop—

There check'd his steps.—"Hillo!" but no reply—
"What, hoa! who waits?"—his loud voice rent the sky.
Dread silence follow'd,—and his bold heart sunk.

"Sure those within must be asleep or drunk."
He first peep'd in,—then enter'd,—but could find
None, save one old man, almost deaf and blind.
"Father!" he cried;—the old man answer'd "Son!"—
"Have you an axe?"—the sage replied, "Here's one."—
"The price?" he ask'd.—"Three mace."—"I'll give you two."
—"Enough." He seized it, paid, and on he flew.

Not far from thence—from thence it might be seen—
There grew a tea-tree, of the sort call'd green:
To that he bent his flight, and there he found
One branch that grew breast-high above the ground.
He cut it midway through—part fell down flump,
And part was left outstanding from the stump.
The first he dragg'd away, and threw aside;
The last he sharpen'd with the tool: then cried,
"Oh! worst of all plant-kind! malignant tea!
Since my sweet girl, my all-beloved Bohea,
For whom have I such bitter cause to grieve,
Amid thy lifeless leaves of life took leave;
What better course could be, what wiser plan
Devised for me—oh! most unhappy man!
To leave a world of which my soul is sick,
Than on thy stick thus cut, to cut my stick!"

He said, and moving some few paces back
To gain a run, he made his girdle slack,
And bared his breast:—then raising to the skies
His hands, he oped his mouth, and closed his eyes,
Breathed out one last sigh for his love's sweet sake,
Cried "Oh, Bohea!" and rush'd upon the stake.
The stake went through between his lights and liver—
He gave four kicks, two screeches, and one quiver—
He felt the sharp wood in his vital parts,
And in that quiver seem'd ten thousand darts.
"Oh Fo!" he cried, or ere his eyes grew dim—
"Oh Fo!" he cried, and Fo gave ear to him—
"Oh Fo!" he cried, "be not a foe to me,
But draw me hence, yet, yet my love to see.

Since early death thus bliss on earth denies,
Oh! let us meet and mingle in the skies.
And though our parents' hearts have yet been hard,
Whence our fond hearts were each from each debarr'd,
Grant that they now may sorrow o'er our doom,
And lay our bones together in one tomb,
And write our tale, that all our fates may know!"
This said, young Hyson was absorb'd in Fo.

Her parents in the tea-pot found Bohea—
They drew the body thence, and saved the tea,
Rich store, in well-cork'd jars, for livelong weeks.
But tears meanwhile bedew'd their tender cheeks;
And much they wish'd, when every wish was vain,
They ne'er had parted that most faithful twain.
And Hyson's parents found him on the stake—
A sight to make their fond hearts yearn and ache;—
Hung up, ah me! in every breeze to spin,
Like windmill's sails, or chafers on a pin.
They moved him thence—they laid him in a shell—
They learn'd the fate of her he loved so well.
They, too, at last relented—but too late;
And feeling guilty, threw the blame on fate.

Then well-writ notes and courteous messages
Pass'd between Hyson's father and Bohea's.
Old feuds forgot, they clear'd their brows of gloom,
And both subscribed to build one common tomb.
Even on that spot where met those thralls of love,
One half beneath the ground, and half above,
Of tea-pot shape 'twas built, but partly hid,
And the roof fashion'd like a tea-pot lid,
The whole when lined with finest porcelain clay,
There, in two chests, Bohea and Hyson lay.
A plant of tea was set on either side;
This green—the sort on which young Hyson died;
That black—a kind since far and wide renown'd,
In whose infusion fair Bohea was drown'd.
The plants grew well, and, rich in leaf and bloom,

The branches mingled o'er the lovers' tomb;
Whence those two species, from those days to these
Have borne the names of Hysons and Boheas.
Still maids and lovers to that tomb repair
To plight the vows of fond affection there;
Kneel by the grave, or lift their hands above
To pluck the sprigs as talismans of love;
And gentle brides, their husbands' hearts to fix,
Of those two kinds the cup of union mix.
Ne'er had the fond pair known that state divine,
"Where transport and security entwine;"
But since kind Death hath tied them in one tether,
Their namesake leaves full oft are brought together,
In equal chests (with India-paper linings),
In transports, with security, to Twining's.

Then weep no more for that united pair,
Since thus in death one common lot they share;
And, like their trees that high in air embrace,
Fo bade their spirits rise from that low place
To meet above; and Hyson and Bohea
Now mix their essence both in Tien* and tea.

* Heaven.

# THE PORCELAIN BATH.*

On the ground whence it grew
Falls the shade of the yew:
Thus shall those ever rue
From whom evils accrue.—To-Whoo.

The gallant Si-Long, who, though yet quite a youth, had attained to high rank as a civil mandarin, was charged with an imperial message from Peking into the province of Honan. The object of his mission was to order the attendance, in the capital, of a celebrated physician, whose extensive astrological lore had enabled him successfully to combat all diseases, and had spread his fame throughout the northern provinces of China. The Emperor had been seized with a sudden sickness, which appeared the more dangerous, as the physicians of his court admitted their ignorance of its nature; and were at a loss whether to ascribe it to hot or cold humours; to the influence of some undetected comet; to too great a prevalence of red, white, green, or yellow, in the furniture of the palace and the foliage and ornaments of the gardens; or to the withering of a peach-

* The documents from which this story is compiled were obligingly forwarded to us, during our residence in China, by our esteemed friend Poo-Loo, who expressed himself willing, for a moderate remuneration, to make oath to their authenticity. He requested us, if ever we should throw them into form for the benefit of the English reader, (the particular object with which they were commended to our care,) to mention that the Porcelain Bath of the Empress Tou-Këen having, when already arrived at an advanced age, been accidentally broken, an indefinite ancestor of his purchased the remains, and that these have since been carefully preserved by his family till they came into his own possession. He wishes to assure the public that no other ingredient than a powder obtained from these talismanic antiquities is employed in the manufacture of his celebrated cement; and to inform them that some finer portions of this pulverized material are made up in small packages for the benefit of those labouring under mental diseases: a single dose sufficing to restore to sanity any individual who has the misfortune to be cracked.

tree in a court of the imperial residence. Among other suggested causes, it was not forgotten that he had lately lost a fine ky-lin, carved out of *yu* or jade; and that on the last occasion when, in conformity to the annual custom of the rulers of the Flowery Land, he set an example to his people by going forth to guide the plough, his imperial foot failed him, and he came down bodily upon a gourd, whereby that emblem of longevity was smashed; he being himself of gourd-like shape, and no slight weight withal*.

It was necessary, as the doctors were undecided in opinion, to seek some further advice; and none, it was considered, was so able to supply it, as Nu-Moun, the mighty astrologer. To him, therefore, Si-Long was sent; and, mounted on his fiery Tartar steed, which, however, was more remarkable for his roadway capabilities than for his beauty or condition, the young mandarin had proceeded indefatigably for some days, when on his making inquiries at a barber's shop, where he dismounted for a few minutes to get shaven and shampooed, he learned that he had arrived within thirty ly of Honan, and was distant six or seven only from the residence of the physician. The situation of the latter was pointed out to him from that spot.

It lay a little out of the high road, and he struck across to it accordingly. Nu-Moun had desisted from the general practice of his art, being of studious habits and fond of retirement; and he now lived in a small country-house in a sequestered spot, with the companionship only of a daughter; his wife having died some years since without other offspring. Si-Long had no difficulty in discovering the villa, as the spot was on the slope of a hill opposite to the path by which he approached, and was sufficiently marked by a group of bamboos, among which the house was hidden. No other habitations were in its vicinity except huts of the meanest class.

Si-Long had just reached the gateway, and was congratulating himself on having finished his toilsome journey, when an unfortunate circumstance occurred. He intended to have alighted there, and to have proceeded on foot towards the house; and he had already gone over in his mind the bows, the bends, turns, gestures, and verbal compliments necessary to be observed; as

* See note, O.

well as those set down in the ritual code, a copy of which he carried in his bosom, as those which the College of Forms and Ceremonies had appointed for the particular occasion. But just as he was about to rein up his Bucephalus (called Jee-Woh in the language of China), the astrologer himself, who at the moment was walking in the garden, appeared at the gate; and the steed taking fright at his spectacles (of which, as the wisest man in the empire, he of course wore the largest pair), reared right on end, by which unexpected evolution the young mandarin was thrown, whilst yet more unfortunately the horse fell over upon him.

The philosopher hastened to his assistance; that is to say, he ran away as fast as he could, and called loudly for help. Persons came, and poor Si-Long was released; but one of his legs and five of his ribs were broken.

When the physician had recovered from his fright, he went

into his house to see the luckless youth, whom the servants had conveyed thither. He dismounted the majestic spectacles that jockeyed his own reverend nose, wiped the crystals in the bow of his pigtail, and by means of two silken cords which passed behind his ears, and which for greater gravity were finished with huge tassels, again suspended them in their place. He approached the bed, and, by a catechism of learned questions, soon ascertained that the youth was seriously hurt; but in what particular way he was not able to discover. He repaired therefore to his observatory, that he might hold a consultation with the stars: and it was soon decided between them that the case of the young equestrian was desperate, and that a raging fever would be followed by his speedy death.

Under these circumstances, there was little to be done but to prescribe some medicines and several ceremonies; of which the former were rather intended to facilitate death, and dispose the body to suffer embalment kindly, than to ward away a fate which was considered inevitable. The patient, however, was not yet so far gone but that he remembered the object of his mission, and delivered to the astrologer the written order commanding his immediate departure for Peking.

Nu-Moun was startled at this communication; and seizing in each hand the pulleys of his spectacles, and drawing them downwards with some force so as to fix the lenses more firmly in their place, he proceeded to examine the letter. When he perceived that it was signed at top with the imperial signature, he placed it reverentially on a small table, and supporting it against a vase, performed the *kow-to* before it; that is to say, he knelt three times, and struck his forehead nine times against the floor. This done, he took the epistle, and squatting down cross-legged upon a mat, perused the document with great attention.

The Emperor's well-known liberality was such, that it was certain the service thus required of the physician would not be meanly rewarded. But Nu-Moun had shown how little regard he paid to the acquisition of wealth, by foregoing a profitable and honourable profession just when he had attained, by general acknowledgment, the highest rank therein, and retiring to dwell in an humble manner in a secluded country place. Yet, as he read, there was a smile upon the countenance of the philosopher,

and his eyes were expanded with a pleasant surprise almost to the size of the spectacle lenses. This did *not* arise from any prospective calculation of the emolument to accrue from his visit. The high honour conferred upon him was that by which his great mind was so gratified; and the privilege he should enjoy of beholding his august sovereign, for whom he entertained the most filial and profound veneration.

Nu-Moun had cured great numbers of great people; he had killed great numbers also: but even those he killed he cured afterwards by an embalming process; so it may be stated generally that he cured them all. Mandarins of all ranks had been under his care: where he succeeded the merit was all his own; where he failed, the fault was in fate or nature. He was not unaware of his superior science, and he thought it no great acquisition of honour to himself, that even the governors of provinces should apply to him when their five elements were out of due proportion. But he justly accounted it no little thing that he should have been summoned from so great a distance, singly to attempt that, in behalf of his great lord and master, the Son of Heaven, and Father of the Celestial Land, which had baffled the science and defeated the skill of the seventy-two chief physicians.

Had it been otherwise than agreeable; the Emperor's mandate must not the less have been obeyed. The physician prepared, therefore, to commence his journey by the dawn of day.

There was, however, one matter which caused him some uneasiness, and it will not be difficult to divine what that might be. The young Si-Long was bruised and battered in a manner that rendered it impossible, without the utmost inhumanity, to attempt his removal from the house; and the philosopher's daughter, a beautiful young lady, just arrived at a marriageable age, must be left under the same roof with him, without any guardian, and with only the fellowship of two or three domestics. This was certainly awkward; although of real danger there could be little or none; for the maiden was discreet, and the youth a youth of honour and of several broken bones. But the situation of affairs was such as admitted of no remedy; and the certainty that Si-Long had not long to live was a source of consolation to Nu-Moun.

The physician, before his departure, at the same time that he gave her much other very sensible advice, recommended his daughter to keep herself, during his visit to the capital, entirely to her own apartments; but desired her to make inquiries daily concerning the health of the young invalid, and to be sure that the domestics were not wanting in attention to him. To them also he gave discreet rules of conduct, and instructed them how to act upon the death of the stranger; an event which he stated would take place in about ten days.

He departed, and his dutiful daughter began the management of affairs in his absence with the properest circumspection. She ordered that several skreens should be expanded in the passage that separated her apartment from that in which the young man was placed; and was careful as much as possible, though sundry thick walls were between them, to keep her back turned in that direction.

A female servant, who was old and ugly, was engaged in attendance on the youth. From her the beautiful Tou-Këen* learned that he was handsome and had a pleasant voice. She soon found that it was awkward to be constantly moving backwards or sideways, and relaxed the severity of her observance in that particular.

Contrary to all expectation, Si-Long survived the tenth day, and at the expiration of that time showed evident symptoms of improvement. Tou-Këen, in obedience to her father's desire, received a daily report of his progress from her old attendant; and, with great consideration for his health, when she found that he was gaining strength, ordered that the skreens might be removed, to admit of the better ventilation of his apartment.

After the lapse of a few weeks he could rise from his bed and move about the chamber; and she then recommended that he should take exercise in the passage, which was of greater extent. The youth, whose feelings were of the properest description, finding himself so far recovered, considered it time, though he was still weak, to leave a house where accident had placed him under circumstances of so delicate a nature; and he therefore, with every due form, sent in his compliments to his youthful hostess, to express his gratitude for the attentions he

* See note, P.

had received, and bid her a respectful farewell. Tou-Këen, however, thought it would not be becoming, in the absence of her father, that a visiter should be suffered to quit the house without receiving the usual compliments and politenesses due to a guest; and feeling thus, she very properly resolved to act as the representative of her papa on this particular occasion. She accordingly went into the passage to bid, on the part of her sire, a formal adieu to Si-Long; but the moment she beheld his pale cheek and sunken eye, she perceived how improper, how dangerous it would be for him to encounter the fatigue of a removal so soon. With the greatest delicacy, however, he persisted in his purpose; with the greatest hospitality, she, upon the part of her father, insisted that he should prolong his stay. Their polite contest lasted just four hours and sixteen minutes, in which time they acted through every section of the two-hundred and fifty-seventh book of the Code of Forms and Ceremonies; that being the portion which treats of the departure of a guest. In the end Si-Long was vanquished—as how could it be otherwise?—and he promised to defer his departure.

The ice was broken—it had not been thick—and a warm fountain of love sprung up in the hearts of the young people. Thenceforth they were much together; they could not be happy apart; they sighed sighs; they vowed vows; in fine, they arranged a little scheme for boating it together down the current of matrimonial felicity.

Nu-Moun was detained in Peking longer than he anticipated. At last, however, he succeeded in taking his revered master the Emperor off the sick-list;—though, unfortunately, only by placing him upon the bills of mortality. Communicating to his daughter intelligence of this circumstance, he gave her to understand that he should return home in a very few days; and Si-Long had no longer any difficulty in persuading his betrothed that he was so far convalescent as to admit, without imprudence, of his taking his immediate departure. Before he went, however, it was settled between the pair, that the young lady should obtain her sire's consent to their union, and induce him, as soon as preliminaries could be arranged, to convey her to Peking for the performance of the marriage

ceremonies. So Si-Long at last departed, and in a few days Nu-Moun returned.

The physician was astonished to find that the young mandarin had gone, not having been aware that he had so far recovered as even to leave his chamber. He was more surprised, and not altogether pleased, to discover that the skreens of which his daughter's first letter had made mention, had been so soon displaced; and his spectacles assumed a larger appearance than ever when he heard of the subsequent progress of events. His pigtail grew exceedingly uneasy, waving in gentle undulations, and occasionally coiling round his shoulders; and, lighting his pipe with great precipitation, he began to smoke with so much energy as to wrinkle up the bamboo, and contract it in length some inches.

Now the fact is, that Nu-Moun would have excused his daughter's imprudence, and would have no objection to her marriage with a young mandarin of so much repute as Si-Long, had it not chanced that he had formed a little plot of his own, with which that of the young people might materially interfere. A fortunate conjunction of stars had suggested the idea; and the more he had pondered upon it, the more it had delighted him.

Need it be said that Tou-Këen would not have been fixed upon as the heroine of this story, had she not been at that precise period the most beautiful lady in the Chinese dominions? Now it is a custom in the Celestial Land when a fresh ruler comes to the throne, (as, thanks to the astrological science which Nu-Moun himself had brought to bear on the late Emperor, was now about to be the case,) that parents who possess unmarried daughters of great beauty, and of a marriageable age, respectfully offer them to the notice of their sovereign; and from among these, besides making up his little museum of handmaidens, he not unfrequently selects his Empress.* The worshipful physician was already in favour with the Emperor elect; so that he might consider there would be little difficulty in obtaining for his lovely daughter an introduction to that potentate. And then—relying much on her surpassing beauty, but more on the promise of the stars—he entertained a strong hope, almost a confidence, that she would find such favour in

* See note, Q.

the imperial eyes as to be the enviable one selected to share the throne;—or at least—but no "at least"—it must assuredly be thus, and not otherwise.

Nu-Moun was therefore perplexed; but entertaining no very high opinion of the permanency of ladies' affections, he determined to conceal his purpose for a time, till the ardour of her love for Si-Long might somewhat abate; but to accede to her request so far as the journey to Peking was concerned. The idea of becoming an Empress, he imagined, must kindle some feelings of ambition in any female mind; and as he reflected thus, his queue grew calmer.

Nu-Moun was not mistaken in his judgment of his daughter. He took her to Peking, and soon venturing to communicate his scheme to her, was delighted to find how readily and how warmly she entered into his views. She requested only that he would endeavour to keep their proposed proceedings a secret from Si-Long; because, if it should prove that the Emperor was without discrimination, it would be well, she considered, to have, as the Chinese express it, another spoon to her rice.

The Emperor, though a new Emperor, was already an old man. But the ladies forgot the old man in the young Emperor; and many would even have consented to have become old women, could they thereby have secured to themselves a share in the imperial throne. At his inauguration, many of those most remarkable for beauty, who in conformity with the custom to which we have adverted, had been brought from various parts of the empire, were brought to him for selection; and he chose from among them several, who were honoured with particular appointments in the palace. But when the surpassingly beautiful Tou-Kĕen was introduced into his presence, he rose with unspeakable condescension, and declared before the assembled court, that he recognised that lady as the person to whom he had been mated some thousand years before, in a different state of being, and who was destined to become his spouse in this. The next day he sent forth a proclamation, giving the wisest and best reasons for having made use of an abridged edition of the marriage ceremonies, and declaring that his imperial example in this instance was not to be referred to as a precedent.

When the unfortunate Si-Long received the news of his

beloved Tou-Këen's marriage with the Emperor, he for a long while refused to give it credence; declaring that the lady was engaged to himself, and that truth itself was not half so true as she. As soon, however, as he became convinced of the fact, he was well-nigh beside himself with rage and despair. He gnashed his teeth, and tore his pig-tail, and declared that Tou-Këen was falsehood itself. "I will be revenged," cried he, "as sure as a bow and arrow." Guns had not at that time been introduced in China.

His conduct and declarations became a theme of wonder at court; and a mandarin, who had been jealous of the favour Si-Long had obtained from the late Emperor, ventured to report to the new one all that he had so rashly spoken. Poor Si-Long would soon have been like a volume of fugitive poetry,—to wit, a collection of small pieces,—but for the interposition of the amiable Tou-Këen, who was opposed to such poetical justice. The beautiful Empress, however, was not unwilling that her too aspiring lover should meet with a punishment proportioned to his offence; so she suggested that he should receive two hundred strokes of the bamboo, and that, with the imperial gratuity of ten score marks which would accompany the execution of this order, he might be dismissed from the province of Pe-che-le. An Emperor of China, as the father of his people, well understands that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, and the bamboo is one of the most useful plants in his dominions. His subjects naturally prize it, because they *feel* its use.

After obtaining such proof of his mistress's favour. Si-Long had little desire to remain longer in the capital, and thus banishment became to him a matter of indifference. He was behind the world, or, as it is more commonly expressed, the world was before him; and he set forth from the great capital with his little capital upon his back. He was likely to retain his *marks* some time; but, as his mandarin's button had been taken from him, he was no longer among the *nobles*.

He wandered on, greatly depressed in spirit, and careless whither chance might lead him, and for several days mechanically retraced the way he had lately taken when intrusted with the Emperor's commission. Having at length arrived at the place where the path turned off to the dwelling of the physician, he

could not resist an inclination to revisit the abode which he had left with such pleasing anticipations. Not doubting, however, that his story had got there before him, he did not venture to show himself in front of the house; but, choosing the dusk of the evening, he went stealthily through the garden, and passed along avenues of bananas and orange-trees, till he came to a small summer-house, commanding an extensive view of a tank of gold fish. In that fantastic building he threw himself down on a bamboo bench,—he did not notice that it was of bamboo, or he would have chosen some other,—and looked pensively at the water, and at the fish that sported so merrily therein. He had once before sat in that place: the beautiful, but faithless Tou-Këen was then his companion: they had slipped forth unobserved of the domestics, and in that retreat had enjoyed an hour of delightful intercourse, such as in the Celestial Land falls to the lot of few lovers, although such hours only can make the Celestial Land a perfect paradise. His heart was low,—and as he looked at the gold fish, and thought of his false lady, he repeated to himself the words of the celebrated poet, Sing-Song, which have been so well translated by Gray:—

"Not all that tempts our wandering eyes,
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Not all that glisters, gold."

"Ah!" said he, "false Tou-Këen! you deceived your faithful Si-Long; he would have treasured you as the precious metal, and behold you elude his grasp as a slippery fish. Farewell, however, Tou-Këen! far be it from me to cherish feelings of revenge or hate against one whom I have loved so truly."

Having spoken thus, he was possessed with a strong desire to put an end to his miseries by a plunge into the tank. But the drowsy god was just at the time beginning to exercise so powerful an influence upon him, that he was constrained to defer this till he should have taken a short nap.

To this end he fell asleep; and in his sleep he had a dream. From a vase that stood upon a pedestal in the middle of the tank, a little mist seemed suddenly to arise, which, gradually spreading and approaching him, revealed amid its rolling volumes the figure of his guardian joss. This was a little punch-bellied

divinity, who sat cross-legged, as is the custom of all guardian josses. His face was full of quintessential wisdom, its very furrows seemed to have been made by "wise saws," and the air of the whole was a sort of proverbial expression. "My son," said he, "though gravity of face suiteth with wisdom, yet laughter itself is not so vain and profitless as tears; and remember that half a potful is better than no rice. Therefore arise and go thy way, and away with ungainly grief. Bend thy steps south-eastward from this province of Honan, and pass through Hoo-Pe, till thou comest to Kiang-Si. There attend the chances that await thee. This much I read of thy fate: the Emperor yet shall honour thee, though now he hath thus cast thee down, and thy name shall go forth through all the land, and be remembered through all ages. If the honour cometh slowly, remember, the great wall was not built in a day; keep up thy courage and persevere in the path upon which thou enterest; patience and perseverance dug the great canal. Here, take this talisman. It will aid thee in all thou devisest. It will make hot cold, and cold hot. But whenever thou hast some purpose to effect, thou must hold it in thine hand. Untouched it will avail nothing. Farewell."*

This said, the portly joss grew fatter and thinner; fatter and fatter in size, but thinner and thinner in substance; until, as the Chinese poet,—that is to say, the poet of the Celestial Empire,—that is to say, the divine bard, expresses it,

> "Like glory, or a circle in the water,
> By gradual spreading he dispersed to nought."

As soon as the joss had vanished, Si-Long awoke. At the time he fell asleep, the moon had not long appeared above the horizon; when he rose, she had just reached her zenith. There she hung, as the great chandelier of the night, the stars glittering round her like single candles stuck about the cupola of heaven. Majestic orb! a Chinese writer has aptly likened her to a pot of rice, and the stars to scattered grains.

Si-Long arose. He looked up at the moon; he looked down at the water: he thought of his meditated leap into the latter, with the moon reflected within it, it appeared too deep.

* See note, R.

He looked at the vase that stood on a pedestal in the midst of the tank; and, as his eye fell upon this, his vision or dream returned to his memory, and quite determined him not to plunge too rashly. But as he recollected the apparition of the joss, he remembered likewise the talisman; and not until then did he notice that betwixt the finger and thumb of his left hand he held a small crooked coin, which he recognized immediately as the gift of his guardian spirit. Encouraged by such a discovery, he rose and bade adieu for ever to that sad scene of former happy hours, and, finding that the garden-gate was fast, climbed the wall with some difficulty,—declining the proffered assistance of a bamboo,—and alighting in safety on the other side, set forward at once on his journey towards the south-east, in obedience to the recommendation of the joss.

We leave him on his way, and return to Peking. As we approach this city we hear Tou-Këen from every mouth. Within the walls Tou-Këen is the universal theme of conversation too; but there we hear less of her, for not being far from the palace, all speak in whispers. Tou-Këen the beautiful; Tou-Këen the fantastic; Tou-Këen the petulant; Tou-Këen the cruel; Tou-Këen the unjust; Tou-Këen that rules the ruler; Tou-Këen that squanders the money of the land; everywhere Tou-Këen; all day long Tou-Këen; Tou-Këen, Tou-Këen, Tou-Këen,—nothing but Tou-Këen.

The young Empress, in the mysterious way that sometimes happens, had acquired a surprising influence over the old Emperor, although he was the despotic sovereign of the great Central Empire, and she a weak woman just raised to dignity from no very high rank among his subjects. Ah, wonderful beyond all wondrous things thy fascinating power, O beauty, who imprisonest Kings with thy locks, and makest Emperors bend beneath thy lashes! Tou-Këen soon felt her power, and she made the Emperor feel it; and like the shock of a galvanic battery, it passed from him to those next him in degree, and so through the whole circle of society. Never were humours so fantastic as those which Tou-Këen taxed her lord, and which her lord taxed the whole country to gratify. She ordered new buildings and decorations in the palace; a gimcrack arch of porcelain in the great court before it; tall columns, supporting

at telescopic heights the figures of warriors and great men (it was a pity she possessed no Herschel's telescope to bring their features within view); new gardens filled with majestic rocks of glass and terracotta, with trees dwarfed down to shrubs, and with flowers in pots upon artificial branches, fine specimens of the manner in which Art can turn Nature inside out, or make her stand upon her head. She would have, too, garden buildings devised in all the forms of Chinese puzzles, lakes of coloured water filled with artificial fish, and lofty bridges erected upon level lawns. She issued her command, and temples and theatres were there mingled together, and pig-tailed and gods fantoccini flourished falchions and flags, beat drums, and smoked their pipes and incense-pots in happy emulation of each other. But in the decorations of her own apartments, in her dress, and in her food, the beautiful and proud Tou-Këen was yet more lavish and fantastic. Large pieces of furniture, wrought of rhinoceros ivory, in that exquisite style of carving in which the Chinese are yet unequalled, or in jade and precious marbles, inlaid with diamonds and rubies; pillows and beds of spider-silk, stuffed only with parrots' down; robes woven of gold filaments resembling silk, and enriched with a wonderful embroidery, which all the first ladies in the empire were compelled to execute; dishes of woodcocks' brains, the pupils of cats' eyes, snails' horns, and mouse-foot jelly; these were but a few among her multitudinous devices.

The whims of the most whimsical Tou-Këen furnished ample employment to all the best artificers in ivory, in the precious metals, in silks, in porcelain, and in whatever else might conduce to ornament and luxury. Yet her commissions were felt to be, not patronage, but tyranny; for, though those who executed her commands in a manner which gave her satisfaction were well paid, and even rewarded for their labour; the much larger numbers who failed, in spite of their most anxious endeavours, to win her approbation, were punished with various degrees of severity. Some were bambooed; some had their shops or workhouses destroyed; some were banished to remote parts of the empire. The tasks which she set to the porcelain manufacturers were particularly troublesome: for after these had formed the clay, by the most careful and skilful manipulations,

into unusual and difficult shapes, their labours were apt to be rendered unavailing by the uncontrollable effects of the fire to which the earthy material had necessarily to be subjected.

Among other fancies, she had demanded from these artists a bath, of most fantastic form, the sides and edge of which should be formed of a filigree of flowers, fruit, birds, shells, and figures; the whole to be contrived with great intricacy and elaborated with extreme minuteness. Of this a model was prepared in Peking; and sent thence to the factory at King-te-chin, then an establishment of considerable repute, which has since become the most famous in all China.*

No such piece of porcelain, either for size, or for the curiosity of the workmanship, had hitherto been attempted; and the proprietor of the furnaces was dismayed when he received the order. Among the artificers in his employ, however, was a young man of extraordinary skill, who had already performed some commissions of the Empress, for which the furnaces of best repute had been tried; the manufacturers of best repute bastinadoed: and this person, who had lately been looked upon as a prodigy of skill and oracle of art, readily took upon himself the perilous responsibility of forming the porcelain bath.

This ingenious young artist—(perhaps you may have guessed so much)—was no other than our heroic Si-Long,—at least Si-Long the hero of our story,—who had arrived one evening, tired and hungry, in the neighbourhood of the porcelain manufactories of King-te-chin. As he had found it neither reputable nor agreeable to roam about so long without money or credit, or changes of clothes, and as he recollected the advice of his guardian joss that he should tarry in Kiang-Si, it occurred to him that he might be able to obtain employment in the porcelain factories, and that as he was possessed of much ingenuity and taste, he might thus occupy himself in a manner at once lucrative and honourable. He found no difficulty in forming an engagement with the master of the principal establishment; but what may have rendered this the more easy was, that when he presented himself to make an offer of his services his hand was unconsciously placed upon the talisman he had received from the joss. But for this fortunate accident, it is probable that

* See note, S.

references as to character might have been required, and it would not have been pleasant to have been forced to appeal to his friend the Emperor, for credentials.

He afterwards remembered the talisman, and it made hard things easy to him, and aided him in all he devised. This it was which enabled him, though with such little experience in the fabrication of china ware, to perform what had baulked the ablest workmen.

Si-Long applied himself assiduously, with the assistance of several ingenious artists, to imitate in the clay the model of the bath. It was wrought to its due form; was coloured and glazed. After that it was placed, not without some difficulty, in a furnace, which, under his particular superintendence, had been erected for the occasion. No vessel of porcelain clay the tenth part its size, had ever before undergone the process of burning. Of course, therefore, the most extraordinary care must have been requisite in the operation. Si-Long had had the furnace formed with various apertures, in such a manner that the heat could be suddenly increased or diminished on any side; and he himself stood upon a raised platform, and looked down a sloping shaft into the enormous cistern of fire, that he might observe the progress of the burning, and give orders to the workmen accordingly. It was necessary to subject the clay to intense heat: the bath was so large that otherwise a portion only might have been sufficiently baked, whilst other parts were scarcely affected by the fire. Si-Long's arrangements had been excellent: all seemed proceeding well. He did not forget meanwhile to hold the talisman in his hand: and he fully appreciated the value of the gift, and the benevolence of the giver. He looked hard at it, his heart overflowing with satisfaction and gratitude. It was lying on the forefinger of his right hand, and the knuckle of the thumb: his hand was half-closed, and his thumb-nail was in the bend of the middle finger. "O thou invaluable prize!" said he, and his thumb sprang suddenly upward, and twirled it in the air. He meant to have caught it as it fell; but in his delight he had tossed it rather too high, and he caught it rather too nervously: it struck his hand, and rebounding from that, passed down the sloping shaft into the furnace, and fell into the bath. Si-Long looked after it in dismay: and, as his eyes

were fixed upon the bath, he observed a line all down the side, a line which at first seemed scarcely thicker than a hair; but soon it appeared like a wire against the porcelain; then like a cord; and still it opened wider, and other similar indications of fracture became perceptible.

Si-Long was in despair. The bath was spoiled; the talisman was lost: all hopes of success were by that loss removed for ever: his reputation, of which he had grown proud, was ruined; the Empress, whom in spite of the falsehood and cruelty she had exercised towards him, he had toiled, with great self-satisfaction, to gratify, would be disappointed of her bath: and the bamboo grew more abundantly in Kiang-Si than in the northern provinces. Those thoughts passed as quick as pulsations through his brain. Poor Si-Long was reduced to horrible despair; and clasping his hands together in a frantic manner, and tucking up his petticoat,—swift as an *ignis fatuus* he plunged head-foremost into the fire.

When the master of the furnaces and his workmen perceived what Si-Long had done, they ran away in great fright, and with much precipitation, some calling on Fo, and some on Con-fu-tsze and some on Laou-Keun. They spread about through the neighbourhood, and told the tale at all the factories; then assembled at one place, and held a council of war; and after much deliberation, agreed to return, that they might afford Si-Long all the assistance in their power.

They went back accordingly: but what was their surprise on opening the doors of the furnace, to find that the fire had burned out, that the bath was yet perfect and fully baked, and that poor Si-Long lay, a mere heap of cinders, within it.

When they had reduced all that remained of him more completely to ashes, they deposited these in a porcelain vase, and buried them beneath the furnace. They mourned for him very strenuously; because they remembered that the Empress might have fresh fancies; and in such a case, without a Si-Long, they had nothing better to look to than bamboos, or banishment,—perhaps a bow-string.

The Empress was delighted with the bath exceedingly; but when she heard the fate of the unhappy Si-Long she was afflicted beyond measure with laughter uncontrollable.

"What," said she, "Si-Long, the audacious youth whom we let off so cheaply with a couple of hundred blows? The youth who accused the Empress of the Central Empire of inconstancy to *him*? A handsome youth, you say; black eyes, large ears, thick lips; as fat as turtle, and with a pig-tail reaching to his heel. Believe me, it can be no other than that same, that very same insolent Si-Long. And so he jumped into the fire? He! he! he!—how exceedingly queer! And they found him in this bath, too, you say? Ho! ho! ho!—I shall die with this fit. Quite baked! quite roasted! quite broiled! Ha! ha! ha! —how absurdly ridiculous! Come, get me ready this bath, that my poor bambooed lover was fried in. Let it be well filled with cool cocoa-nut milk, and high-scented cinnamon waters, and spread lotus-leaf couches around. More pleasant to bathe in it then (wot ye?) than when it lay in the furnace of King-te-chin."

As soon as the swiftest feet could convey the order, a thousand persons were up to their necks in water, gathering the petals of the sacred lotus, to heap up couches for the capricious Tou-Këen. The bath was prepared in less time than would appear possible, in a beautiful chamber, hung round with the costliest metal mirrors, and carpeted with several thicknesses of the softest silk. The walls were partly clothed with the same; and on ivory and silver tables were disposed baskets of the choicest fruits and flowers, and cages of the most gorgeous birds; whilst at either end of the bath stood huge vases of porcelain, filled with a rare sort of water-lily, and with strange and beautiful fish.

The lovely, the amiable Tou-Këen prepared for the bath, and dismissed her attendants. She floated in the cool cocoa-nut milk and high-scented cinnamon waters; and by drawing a tasselled string, upset a basket which had been suspended near the ceiling, immediately over the bath, and brought down upon herself a dewy shower of rose-leaves.

"And so," said she musingly, "it is really the fact that that aspiring Si-Long, who would have made the surpassingly beautiful Tou-Këen a mandarin's wife—Tou-Këen, who was born to rule the ruler of the world,—it is really a fact that he was scorched to death in this very delightful bath! Well, how exceedingly ingular! Ha! ha! ha! I wonder which way he fell? whether

his head was on this side or on that? I can fancy his nose coming in contact with it here: he! he! he! And here, as sure as I'm an Empress, is a little crack. Hi! hi! hi! What have we here?"

There was a little crack, as the Empress had said; and in the little crack was a little crooked coin,—the talisman which Si-Long had lost. The little crooked coin was almost hidden in the little crack; and both the little crack and the little crooked coin were so little as before to have escaped notice. Tou-Këen, however, detected them. When she saw the little crack she inserted in it the tip of one of her long nails, and as she scraped that along it directed her eye towards the little crooked coin. No sooner did she perceive the latter, than, as was very natural, her fingers were upon it. That little coin, you will remember, was a coin of virtues. It would make hard things easy; it would aid in devices; it would make hot cold, and cold hot. But untouched it would do nothing. No sooner, then, did the beautiful finger of Tou-Këen come in contact with it than the thermometer in the bath was at "Cocoa-nut milk boils;" and the lovely Empress, who was at the moment laughing ho! ho! ho! at one side of her mouth, forthwith laughed oh! oh! oh! on the other.

The fish began to wriggle their tails very livelily, and to turn up their noses; the birds to sing as merrily as though a pie had been opened; but Tou-Këen wriggled worse than the fish, and sung out more loudly than her feathered companions.

Her attendants came tottering into the chamber. Oh, remarkable sight! in the very bath in which Si-Long had been roasted, Tou-Këen was stewed!

Tou-Këen lived just long enough to devise most fantastic tortures for those who had made the bath, for those who conveyed it to Peking, for those who prepared it for her use, and for all the members of her household. But unfortunately Tou-Këen died; and the Emperor wisely considered that the loss of so excellent a mistress and Empress would be sufficient torture for all his loyal subjects.

Between ourselves,—the Emperor had grown tired of her tyranny, and was very well pleased to be thus quit of his lady; so he sent an order to King-te-chin, and to all the other porce-

lain factories, commanding that the youth who had formed such a wonderful bath, and who had disposed of himself in such a wonderful manner, should thenceforth be worshipped as the god of the furnaces*; and he himself made a present of three junk loads of paper to be burned before his shrine. Thus the promise of the joss was fulfilled, that the Emperor should yet honour Si-Long, and that Si-Long's name should go forth through all the land, and be remembered through all ages.

The Emperor, though pleased, mourned very affectionately for the beautiful Tou-Këen, and always preserved with great care a purse manufactured from her skin.

You would, perhaps, wish to know what became of the old physician. Being ill, in a moment of infatuation he prescribed for himself.

* See note, T.

# THE EMPEROR HWANG-TE.*

Let the Emperor plough, and the Empress spin;
Good iron, I wot, is better than tin;
And a garment of silk is soft to the skin.—*Song.*

Cycles and kalpas† have come and have fled,
Since the days when the Emperor Hwang-te sat
At the door of his house, where his table was spread
Over a carpet of cocoa-nut mat.
His diet was simple: rice, water, and meat;
Not costly or rare,—marry, wholesome and sweet;
Yea, whether to subjects or whether to kings,
Meat, water, and rice be the healthfulest things.

His robe of state was a silken stuff,
But the worms then scarce had learned to spin;
His sceptre brave was of elk-horn rough,
All adorned with knobs of brass and tin.
And sovereign and worshipful lord was he,
Of the Central Land of rice and tea:
And of course all the world was beneath his command,
Because he was Lord of the Central Land.

* The legends of the Emperor Hwang-te, or Hoang-ty, belong to a period of Chinese history which certain even of the native writers incline to look upon as somewhat apocryphal. Hwang-te was the second of the human rulers of the Celestial Land; "he was called the Divine Husbandman, and taught his people the arts of agriculture, medicine, and music; whilst his Empress introduced the manufacture of silk."—(Holman's Travels in China.) Hum-Drum, the moralist, poet, and historian, has given, in the following narrative, a more detailed account than is to be met with in any other writer, of the origin of that still-existing custom which confers renown upon the name of Hwang.

† Chinese divisions of time, into periods of sixty years and of a thousand ages, respectively.

But clouds o'er Hwang-te's spirit passed,
And Hwang-te beat his breast and sighed;
For honours high and empire vast,
Were not enough to feed his pride.
Though sages round his throne bowed low,
And sceptred kings performed Kow-to,
His soul was sad with griefs untold;
He pined for wealth of gems and gold.

"Oh! what a glorious thing it were,
To have a house with silver walls,
Roofed, not with boughs of shaven fir,
But golden bars and golden balls;
The floors of porphyry, or of brass;
The throne hewn from a crystal mass;
With flower-pots, tables, lamps and jars,
Of emeralds, jacinths, jets, and spars!

"Oh! would I had a garden rare,
Its trees all formed with ivory stems,
Their leaves of silver pure and fair,
Their flowers of pearls, their fruits of gems,
Their paths inlaid with stones of price,
And fret-works round of rare device,
That kings might come from far to see,
And sages envy rich Hwang-te!"

The moon arose, and rose Hwang-te,
The richest, poorest man of men:
He glanced around that none might see,
And wandered up a gloomy glen,
A gloomy glen whose shades seemed meant
For woe and hate, and discontent;
Its cheeriest spots were thick with graves;
The rest with vaporous pits and caves.

And serpent roots about them twined,
Of all unwholesome trees and shrubs,
With cankerous stalk and leprous rind,
Deep-gnawed by huge and ghastly grubs.

Some leafless rose of bony white;
Some clotted their shadows as thick as night:
And the clam and the grease that thence distilled,
With worse than upas' bane were filled.

Not far within that haggard glen,
Had ever a mortal's foot been set;
It was not stored with breath for men,
But there oozed from the rocks a venomous sweat;
And cumbrous slimy lumps drew there
A sort of life from the viscous air,
And wherever they crawled o'er branches blue,
A festering rot went through and through.

But Hwang, O! he was an Emperor grand,
The "Son of Heaven" and lord of earth;
And therefore might the taint withstand,
Mortal to men of lowlier worth:
And up the glen he boldly marched,
'Mongst gaping pits and caverns arched,
With chambers black and portals grey,
Where night might hide herself i' the day.

He heeded not the shapeless mewts,
And worms enorme, all blotched and bloated;
The grisly flowers and death-clammed fruits,
And venom dews he scantly noted:
The stagnant, black, and glutinous pools,
And cavernous crypts, fit haunts for ghouls:
Nor marked he aught the rankling smell,
That seemed as Time were dead i' the dell.

Natheless his lids were opened wide,
And on the ground, in pensive guise,
He seemed to look; but thought inside
Had closed its shutters o'er his eyes.
"Far in the valley's dismal cells,
'Tis said a strange Magician dwells,
Of gryphon, ghoul, or dragon clan,
Disguised beneath the form of man.

"And he hath heaps of glittering ore,
And walls of solid marbles hewn,
And precious stones a precious store,
And priceless shells that grow i' the moon.
Now, I trust 'tis sooth, what conjurors tell,
That such brave toys he hid i' the dell:
An' I find it true I shall e'en make bold
To ask for a part of his gems and gold."

On strode Hwang-te; and he came at last
To a rock like a skull, half-bleached by time:
Its toothless jaws were a cavern vast,
And the caves of its eyes were roped with slime:
Around it a forest of fungi grew,
Each as huge and as black and as broad as a yew;
Whose rotten parts lay, half crumbled and eaten,
Like pieces of wreck on a shore storm-beaten.

There, throned on a fragment of blue decay,
Within the fungi's grumous shade,
With bloodless flesh of a greeny grey,
And in worm-eaten sepulchre cloths arrayed,
The Enchanter sat, with a ghastly grin,
While fanning himself with a dragon's fin,
And smoking the flabbiest leaves he could cull,
Through a stork's leg-bone and a badger's skull.

His head on its pivot he slowly rolled,
And bent his eyes on bold Hwang-te;
His eyes as unlike life and cold
As the jellies thrown up o' the sands o' the sea.
Then he clenched his fan in a firmer gripe,
And tapped on a fungus the bowl of his pipe:
O'er a snake-long slug its ashes flew,
And the venomous juice soon burned him through.

And he spoke in a voice to make flesh freeze,—
So strange its spell that at each cold word
A [illegible] black clam oozed out of the trees,
The air grew into a closer curd;

And Hwang-te gasped with a choky pain,
As though a corpse on his chest had lain;
His beard stood forth as stiff as a fin,
And his flesh grew rough as a crocodile's skin:

"And who art thou of mortal mould,
That venturest thus within this glen,
Where none but ghosts and corpses cold
Have walked before i' the shapes of men?
Where snake-bane, ghoul-drakes, dragon-stools,
Grow rank round the craters of putrid pools?
Where the air is slab and hath got no sky,
And the light seems the ghost-light of days gone by?"

"Great Emperor I—Hwang-te my name,
The Son of Heaven, and Lord of Earth;
The ends of space are full of my fame,
And stars perplexed to express my worth.
Yet not in the bounds of infinite space
Is wretch so wretched or serf so base;
For, though I be great, and wise, and bold,
I haven't got pearls and gems and gold.

"Oh, fortune foul and fate accurst!
Oh, boundless draught of bitterest bale!
I pine for wealth with a noble thirst,
And therefore came I up this vale.
They say that thou hast heaps of ore,
And diamonds bright in countless store;
To glut mine eyes with these I come,
And I mightily pray ye, give me some."

"An' if ye dare to tread with me
Through the palpable dark of this cave's lone halls,
Where the moulds on the floor are as deep as your knee,
And the cold reek, like charnel-fat, covers the walls;
Where flame will not burn, and no light can exist
Save the luminous gleams from the rot of the mist;
Where the black sucks more blackness from things of dark hue,
Whence the young of the dragon grow ghastily blue:

"I will show ye such treasures, deep down i' the earth,
As ne'er did ye even in thought behold:
Ye shall say if my pearls be pearls of worth,
And I'll make ye a master of gems and gold.
But ere we go bethink ye well
The air how rank and the way how fell;
Lest your blood turn glue as the path we tread,
And your heart be cramped in a knot with dread."

"Forsooth, white fear, with hair so lank,
Is what my Emperor soul contemns;
Though the way be fell and the air be rank,
Hwang-te will be thinking of gold and gems.
So lead ye the way through the cave's black hollow,
And doubt not but I shall be prompt to follow.
For what worse lot could fate unfold
Than not to have gems, and pearls, and gold?"

They entered then the portal grim,
Which choked what more Hwang-te would say:
He felt cold slugs on every limb,
And his heart seemed a cold moist lump of clay.
Two luckless beams that had come in there,
And never again must emerge to air,
Showed into what ridges the roof was thrown.
Like a skeleton's ribs and its grey back-bone.

Hwang-te glared round, below, aloft,
But he said to himself "Oh, gems and gold!"
And such like sounds which he uttered oft,
Were talisman words that made him bold:
And he would not shrink though the sounds of the chasm
Seemed the gasps and groans of unearthly spasm,
And the green mists did all hideous forms assume
As they battened on fat of the putrid gloom.

Oh, what are the terrors but man will dare
When led by the sateless thirst of treasure!
What way through water, or earth, or air,
Or fire, or blood, but his steps will measure!

Then surely is gold a talisman strange
That the inborn nature of man can change!
That can make the deaf asp put out ears as it clinks,
Turn the dove to a vulture, the mole to a lynx.

Hwang-te knew not what hours went by
As after his grisly guide he strode
Down steeps and chasms, now low, now high,
Now narrow, now wide, a hideous road.
But the ceaseless drip of a foul bitumen,
Whose motion served faintly the mists to illumine,
And blast-borne shrieks, a ghostly chime,
With horrid monotony doled out time.

Till a corpse-cold stream in its cavernous course
Hurried them swift as a meteor could follow,
Where a whirlpool of wind, with circling force,
Sucked them down in its plumbless hollow;
When thrown again on the solid ground,
Soon as Hwang-te could gaze around,
Stunned with his ride in the demon car,
Lo, a light like the moon afar!

Lo, a light like the moon afar,
And there towards the Sorcerer turned;
"Now near to the goal of our toil we are,
And near the prize you well have earned."
And larger the moonlight opening grew,
As with quick steps they towards it drew;
And a halo around it seemed to blaze
Of purple and green and golden rays.

And soon upon either side their way,
The rocks were bright with veined ore;
But ha! they have reached the gates of day,
They emerge to a realm of light once more.
Then down on the earth the Emperor lies,
And shields for awhile his dazed eyes.
For when one long hath groped i' the dim,
Light is but a new sort of dark to him.

Oh, there was a realm! a world in the earth,
With a diamond sun and a sapphire sky!
And a town in the midst, to sum whose worth
In vain ten myriad tongues might try!
With golden gates to its gorgeous halls,
Where no life breathes and where no foot falls;
Roofs carved of jade in twist and twirl,
And topaz towers and domes of pearl.

And high in the midst was a palace set
On a hundred steps of rarest yu;
And dragons of emerald, gold, and jet,
In ly-long avenues led thereto;
Of amethyst built its walls and towers,
Its pillars of silver wrought with flowers;
And silver and golden frets between,
Formed many a fanciful fringe and skreen.

Around it twelve pagodas rose,
With garnet base and crystal tops;
Adorned with prominent eaves, and those
With horns and dragons and pearly drops;
For seven tall stories were set between,
Of purple and crimson, and gold and green;
Massive, but so transparent of hue,
That the circling stairs were in part seen through.

And far around that palace bright,
Were wondrous gardens no less fair;
Where all the trees that met the sight,
Were formed of things as rich and rare.
There were goodly clumps of golden palms;
One date from those were an Emperor's alms:
And the thick dark greens of orange groves old
Were covered, for fruit, with globes of gold.

And the apricots there had topaz fruits;
From the mulberry trees rich garnets fell;
And the rice drew pearls from its silver roots;
And rubies filled the pomegranate shell.

The fruits of all the trees were gems;
And bronze and brass were the meanest stems:
And the leaves, o'erwrought with vein and streak,
Were of emerald, jade, or *verde antique*.

And armies of flowers sprang out of the earth,
Or leaned from the rich fantastic vase,
Whose petals were carven from stones of worth,—
Onyx, and beryl, and bright turquoise,
Sardine, and jacinth, and thousands more,
Such as never were seen by man before;
All brighter of sheen and braver of tint,
Than such as be coined in the sun's bright mint.

And through the garden and through the town
A river of liquid silver ran,
Which amethyst boats came floating down,
With never a pilot in form of man.
And here and there, from shore to shore,
Bridges of opal spanned it o'er;
And veins of its current, conveyed through the ground,
Formed fountains and jets in the vales around.

Hwang-te gazed round, and he rubbed his eyes,
For he scarce could trust the tale they told;
He had oft-times heard of sapphire skies,
And oft-times fancied realms of gold;
But he never had deemed such wealths and glories
Were anything more than dreams and stories;
And, lo and behold! he finds at last
All fancies and tales so far surpassed.

Oh, Hwang uplifted his hands at this,
And nothing he thought could make him gladder;
The heart in his bosom seemed swoln with bliss,
As large as a gourd, or a full-blown bladder.
That great devotee of whom mention occurs,
That gazed on a wall for seventy years
Without winking an eye or bending a knee,
Was scarce more happy than bold Hwang-te.

*He* felt a sort of devotion, too,
And thought he for ever his eyes could fix,
Though not upon mere brick walls, 'tis true,
Yet on walls of ruby and diamond bricks.
"Oh! were I the lord of a realm like this,
I mightily fear I should burst with bliss,
For the bound of my heart no ribs could withstand,
Yet I would I were lord of this very same land."

"I give thee all," the Enchanter cried,
"The city, the ground, the groves, the flowers,
The river, the sky; and far and wide
You may roam through the halls or bask in the bowers.
So I leave you now to enjoy alone
The limitless wealth that is all your own;
And should you wish to see me more,
I will be at your side, if you strike the floor."

The great Hwang-te had fixed his gaze
Like a screw, to the sun's broad diamond face;
And "I wonder," thought he, "how much it weighs?
And what is its value in taels and mace?"
But he heard the words the Enchanter said,
And with very glee he turned his head;
He turned it left and he turned it right,
But, lo! the Wizard was not in sight.

Hwang-te was filled with a brief surprise;
But he hadn't much time to spend in wonder,
There were so many things to engage his eyes
And thoughts, around, above, and under.
He was brought to such stand-still by these,
They seemed to have put a bone in his knees,
To have stopped his wheels or broken his chain,
And 'twas long ere he set himself going again.

At last, however, the wish arose
To wander a little about this realm,
And to see what more it might yet disclose,
His spirit with joy to quite o'erwhelm.

He wanted to know the extent of the land;
And to grapple a few of its gems in his hand;
And to list to the music, so fine and ethereal,
His footsteps might rouse from such precious material.

So between the dragons he paced alone,
With foot so free and with brow so bold,
O'er flags that seemed blood turned to stone,
Inlaid with flowers and stars of gold.
And up the flights of rarest jade,
With their frosted silver balustrade;
Where, ranged on plinths above and below,
Were statues of coral, like petrified snow.

And he entered within the palace so bright,
Whose amethyst walls seemed frozen wine;
And under a dome of wondrous height,
The richest of all in that rich mine.
Twelve topaz ribs around it beamed;
Like a strange transparent gold they seemed:
And the parts between were of mother-o'-pearl,
O'erwrought with flower, and leaf, and curl.

The light that the diamond sun sent through
Were faint and sick, and it seemed to swoon;
And as stout Hwang-te looked up thereto,
He fancied himself inside the moon.
Full under the dome, in the midst of the chamber,
Was a beautiful couch all draped with amber;
The frame was carven of mammoths' bones,
And the pillows had stuffing of precious stones.

Hwang-te from home had wandered far;
First up the Enchanter's gloomy glen;
And without any light of sun or star,
Through the cavernous root of the mountain then;
And, lastly, some way he had dragged his bones
Through this region of gold and of precious stones;
And his hope fulfilled and his marvel past,
It was like he should find himself weary at last.

For even the Son of Heaven must crouch
To the lash of hunger and toil and ache:
So he threw himself on the beautiful couch,
Where he meant some short repose to take.
"Oh what," thought he, "will dreams unfold,
Where awake we things like dreams behold?
But I fear it would spoil me of much of my bliss
Could I *dream* there were anything richer than this."

He threw himself on the glittering mass;
But though it was goodly to set one's eye on,
He found that his mattress of feathers and grass
Was by many degrees more pleasant to lie on:
A bed and pillow of precious stones,
Give very poor rest to aching bones;
And he'd just then have parted with bed and dome
For the homely mattress he left at home.

He toss'd about on the golden mesh,
And twisted his body in strangest curves;
For emeralds and rubies ran into his flesh,
And the points of diamonds bruised his nerves.
He uttered loud groans, and heaved deep sighs,
And scarce had power at last to rise,
When his back was torn, and his limbs were sore,
And he more worn than he was before.

Then he went from the dome by an arched way,
And passed along through a corridor dim,
Where the lights and shadows appeared to play
At a game of hide and seek with him.
And he came to a high and gorgeous hall,
With an ivory roof and an emerald wall,
With plinths and pilasters and pillars of jet,
And a cornice of gold with a ruby fret.

The carpet was woven of silver twine,
And gold, and metals more bright than these,
Crimson and green; with a rare design
Of butterflies, flowers, and birds, and trees.

The hundred lamps, hung upon rich silver twist,
Were of ruby, pearl, emerald, and amethyst;
And the diamonds that lit them, seemed, each one,
A splinter hewn from the mid-day sun.

And all adown the lengthened aisles
(Oh, sight that made his heart rejoice!)
Were glittering tables, heaped with piles
Of fruits and viands most rare and choice.
Orange and mango, and citron and pine,
And the clustered wealth of the golden vine;
Beetles of jet and opal snails,
And agates carven as monkeys' tails.

When Hwang beheld these goodliest things,
His stomach was cramped with hunger's grip;
And his jaws seemed tightly tied with strings;
And he felt cold glue upon either lip.
But his tongue slipped about on his upper teeth,
With a watery bed at its sides and beneath;
And to look at his eyes you would soon have divined
'Twas a long time since Hwang-te had dined.

But with marble meats his teeth he marred,
And with stone fruits there of countless sorts;
The silver eggs he found too hard,
And he could not quench his thirst with quartz.
Some ivory fish he essayed to chew;
(Such giants might use if they played at loo);
With plum-pudding stone he cracked his jaw;
And gneiss was a nasty thing to gnaw.

But still the stones at which he bit,
To hunger's edge, sharp whetstones proved;
And with ravenous fire his eyes were lit,
And with hungry furrows his cheeks were grooved:
His stomach was clammed as a cloth that is wrung,
And sharp worms seemed afeed at the root of his tongue:
And he felt the fierce ache of desire in his jaws,
Such as makes the hyena devour its own paws.

He thought of his fare in the world he had left,
And his bowels yearned sore for a pot-full of rice;
And he fell down as one of his reason bereft,
With eyes starting out, and with teeth like a vice;
His throat seemed convulsed as there died in 't a groan;
He dug his long nails through the cheek to the bone;
And he grinned a grim grin, and in rage and despair
Ground his head on the floor till the skull was half bare.

As he struck the stone, lo! a shade was thrown
On the slab where erst no shade might be:
And the Wizard's voice in a cavernous tone,
Cried, "Hwang, what wouldest thou more with me?"
Hwang stared, but new hope gave him words in a trice,—
"I would fain a fair pot of your well-sodden rice,
And a jug of fresh water to moisten my maw;
And a bed to repose on of feathers and straw."

"Ho, ho!" said the Wizard, "and have ye not gold?
And have ye not silver and stones of price?
Nor yet is your lust of wealth controlled?
And will not the gifts ye have got suffice?
Is this banquet unworth? are my beds of no cost?
Do ye wail for what poor things of earth ye have lost?
No rice save of pearl may be found in this place,
No beds save of gems in their rich silver case."

"For a pot-full of rice I thy pearls will restore,
Your beds of gems for a bed of straw;
This wealth would I lose, wer't a myriad times more,
To appease the fierce vulture at work in my maw.
For what is the worth of all riches to Hwang,
If wolfish-eyed hunger in him fix its fang,
If lidless unrest to long torture condemn,
And he die, mid the gleaming of gold and gem? "

"Oh fool!" quoth the Ghoul, "have ye learned so soon
The value of wealth in infinite heaps?
Could ye feed upon rubies as large as the moon,
Would mountains of chrysolite yield sweet sleeps?—

It would serve ye but well should I leave ye to gasp
With the wolf in your belly, your wealth in your grasp;
To starve with the banquet spread out in your view,
And rot among gems that pertain but to you.

"But, an' if ye be willing to yield back my wealth,
I will bear ye once more to the world whence ye came,
Where the blessings of plenty, of rest, and of health,
Should have made the fierce demon of avarice tame.
Go home and enjoy, with enough and to spare;
And know that more wealth is more sorrow and care;
With your silk and your rice be content if ye can,
And learn the real blessings of nature to man!"

Then fell a thick mist on Hwang-te's eyes,
And quite overcome with hunger's pain,
He fell on the floor and did not rise,
Or open his lids in those halls again.
How he came from thence to the upper world
Is a secret for ever in mystery furled:
But soon as the trance of his spirit fled,
He found himself at his home in bed.

He found himself at his home in bed,
His bed of feathers and moss and silk;
And lo! at his side a table spread,
With rice and meat and cocoa-nut milk.
His absence had filled his serfs with doubt,
So in search for their Lord they wandered out:
He was found at the mouth of the Wizard's Glen,
And they bore him thence to the realms of men.

They had sought him at night till dawn of day;
When found he was stiff with a death-cold cramp;
And his raiment was heavy with slime and clay,
And his flesh with an unctuous dew was damp.
With spirit of rice they rubbed his limbs,
And sung by his bed some virtuous hymns;
And life came back to his lips and eyes,
And they marvelled to hear his words so wise.

"Oh, rice," said Hwang, "is better than gold,
And silk is softer than pointed gems;
Contentment is richer than wealth untold,
And wisdom more sovereign than kings' diadems.
So a goodly example (ye stars hear my vow!)
Will I set my brave people, by following the plough;
And my Empress shall teach to make raiment and beds,
By feeding fat silkworms and winding their threads."

And well by Hwang were his words fulfilled,
Whence a custom grew, and even till now,
On a certain day the fields are tilled
When the Emperor's hand doth guide the plough.
And the zeal of the Empress is no wise less ample,
To give all the ladies a worthy example;
So she shows them the way to make beds and habiliments,
By feeding fat silk-worms and winding their filaments.*

* See note, U.

# MARRIAGE IN A MASK;

OR,

# THE CUNNING SHAVER, CHIN.*

Who soaps my chin,
And tickles my skin,
With a straw or a pin? †
My Barber!
*From the First Book of Celestial Classics.*

THERE are no barbers in the world to compare with those of the Celestial Land. Barbers are a genus almost extinct among the nations of the West, and especially among Protestant nations. In Catholic countries a certain few are still kept up for the tonsure of the crowns of monks and friars; but as Catholicism seems to be spreading in our own mechanical land, no doubt even these will soon be superseded by machines for depilating the head. But the barber's craft is more exercised in China than in thrice the world besides. Beards, indeed, there be few; but then there be some two hundred millions of heads to give daily employment to the razor; and a man cannot venture the sharp steel over his own occiput as he can over his lip and chin. The children as well as the men are shaven. And so considerable are the crops thus reaped by the razor, that the mixed *quisquiliæ* of hair and lather, form an object of traffic betwixt the barbers and the market-gardeners :* and it is said that the

* Between this story and an adventure, forming part of a Chinese romance, which has before been translated into English, several points of resemblance are discoverable. But whether these coincidents are accidental, or which of the Celestial writers may have been beholden to the other, we shall not attempt to decide.

† See note, V. * See note, W.

ground which has been fertilized by this compost is particularly productive in bamboos and sugar-canes.

It has often been remarked that particular pursuits exercise a particular effect upon men's characters: that lawyers, for example, as the shadow—as the light, we mean—of law steals over them, become gradually cautious and cunning, and incapable of distinguishing right from wrong excepting by the aid of legal lenses. The physician is known by his air of urbanity and wisdom; what can be so bland as his smile when he assures you that nothing upon earth is half so agreeable as the amalgam of rhubarb and assafœtida he has just been prescribing? But the surgeon, whose manipulations of the suffering are of a sterner nature than mere examinations of the pulse, is a different personage quite; and can wear an unfeeling scowl, as he pokes some devil's claw of a crooked steel instrument into your body, your arm, or your eye! See how some ranting, gin-drinking scion of iniquity becomes transmogrified—we will not say in character, but in outward development of character,—when he takes up with the art, business, and mystery of Methodist ministerialism. And it is the case in like manner with other trades and professions, that the followers of any one have their characters so modified and assimilated by their occupation, that a discriminating person may detect from their behaviour and appearance, the particular school of business in which they have been educated. How instinctively do we cry out in passing through the streets, this man is a newspaper editor, and that a publican; yet it is not altogether the green plaid waistcoat, and unbarbered face, that certify us as to the one, nor the red nose and portly paunch that make us pronounce upon the other. The vest and the beard of the former might pertain as well to a Jew clothes-man, or a landscape-painter; and the proboscis and protuberance of the latter would be no less proper to a bishop or an alderman. But the *habits* of the man—the habits of his mind—are exhibited in other ways than in his figure or his dress.

The influence of particular pursuits upon the moral and intellectual constitution of man, would form a worthy and abounding subject for a philosophical treatise, and if we could condescend to philosophy we would follow it out at length. We are philosophers, that is, a philosopher; though too philosophical to

write philosophy; but as there is no knowing to what we may be reduced, we will not affirm that we never shall devote a portion of our valuable time to this subject. Poets soar, philosophers dig; but fellows like ourselves, the comic philosophers of the day, dance about, hop, skip, and jump,—pleasant exercise, though no very useful employ. We would soar, but we have no wings—besides it don't pay—and we would dig; but that we hold *infra dig.*; or *in for a dig*, like a spade in a potato bed. Besides, in these days, philosophy and all kinds of useful knowledge are as plentiful and cheap as potatoes, and we find it less troublesome and more economical to buy ours ready made. Well then, for the present we will have nothing to do with philosophy, convinced that to eschew it is the truly philosophical course. "Laugh and grow fat," says the proverb, and we confess ourselves ambitious of a goodly obesity; but at present we are as lean as philosophy itself. True, we have our misgivings as to the expansive power that belongs to cachinnation; but we do *not* agree with the fat knight, that grief puffs one out like a bladder. Therefore, we will try to be merry; and grief we will certainly eschew.

But, Daniel Apollo, Esq., where are we running away to? We started from the sign of the Pole and the Pewter Basin, and we were going to run down a barber, after some talk about the tribe; but we have got off the scent, and we must needs try back.

There are no barbers in the world to compare with those of the Celestial Land. And yet their characteristic features are as like to those of the "shavers" once indigenous in the West, as the oranges of the Central Empire to those which draw out a feebler existence in the conservatory of Margam Abbey. I was going just now to observe,—but some observation, equally brilliant, shoved this out of its proper place,—that the nature of many trades and professions at once and obviously explains the particular bent that is given to the characters of those who pursue them: thus, nothing can be more natural than that undertakers should be the jolliest dogs in life; because events which wet the cheeks, or break the hearts of others, are sources of the most comfortable of all comforts—pecuniary comfort—to themselves. But in other cases an explanation is more difficult

and thus it is in the instance of barbers. Why these should be a loquacious race may not be altogether inexplicable! but why they should be gifted with keen wits, be greatly given to practical joking, and have an universal facility in settling the affairs of other folks, it is, at least, not easy to explain. Yet, that such is the case, in the paucity of existing specimens of the genus, I appeal to the drama and romance to prove.

Loquacity, a ready wit, a disposition to tricks and devices, and a fondness for meddling in the concerns of others, are the characteristics of the ten millions of tonsors that flourish cold steel over the two hundred millions of heads in the Regions of Eternal Spring. We are afraid that talking of barbers has affected ourselves with loquaciousness; for there was certainly no need of such a number of *pages* to introduce upon the scene so humble an individual as the barber Chin.

The barber Chin was a gem of razordom, a little dapper man with a large broad head, long flexible pigtail, small rapid eyes, and an expression of countenance delightfully bland. His head was a perfect library of entertaining knowledge,—the most useful sort of knowledge to him,—a reading-room of magazines and newspapers.

Perhaps, indeed, the circulation of magazines and newspapers in the West may have done more to extinguish the race of barbers among us than cheap razors, Mechi's straps and patent shaving-soap combined. For Othello's occupation's gone: barbers were the peripatetic Heralds and Chronicles of the olden day; they went their daily rounds from house to house and received their penny at each,—not for denuding a chin, for folks might have shaved themselves then, as they do now,—but for their parliamentary reports, their police intelligence, their births and marriages, and cases of crim. con. We pay our penny now for a reading of the Times,—the newsman has superseded the barber,—the march of intellect has driven from the field the knights of the razor, and thus the progress of civilization accounts for the decline of *barber*ism.

Who so full of anecdote and song and merry jest as Chin? ho so dainty and scientific in mixing up a lather, so expedius and safe in the employment of the razor? Who so terous and quaint in shampooing a customer, so sure of

eliciting a smile, whether he tickled his ear with a straw or with a story? Who so ready with information and advice adapted to all parties and to all occasions,—with plots and assistance in cases of emergency? And all these, the merits of the barber Chin, were at any time to be brought into exercise for the most moderate fees.

For a fee of five dollars the ingenious Chin had brought about eternal happiness for the previously unfortunate lovers Wee-Ping and Wa-Ling; and within six months after, for the similar fee from each, had effected their disunion, For ten he had secured a poetical prize to the collegian Hi-Fli; and for a smaller sum had subsequently caused the unfortunate poet to be bambooed, at the instance of his rival bard Lo-Flo. For a hundred he had obtained the liberation of the wealthy Swing, who was condemned to suffer torture and decapitation for having wantonly set fire to a village; and for another fifty had had this individual exalted to the chief magistracy of the same village when it was rebuilt. You may think he would soon grow rich upon this plan; but out of the sums so received, he could reserve only to himself a moderate per centage, as he in his turn had many parties to bribe before his different objects could be obtained. Oh, happy country! Celestial Land! where all ranks may equally participate in the manifold blessings and advantages of bribery! True, there is much of bribery and corruption in our own less fortunate country; but these only work well when they form an universal system. Now in China the lowest orders can bribe the lowest officers, the lowest officers can bribe the mandarins, the mandarins can bribe the governors, the governors can bribe the ministers, and the ministers can bribe the "Son of Heaven" himself. This is liberty and equality, and resembles the practice in shops, where all may purchase if they can afford to pay. Depend upon it, justice that is given away is not of the best quality—it *goes for nothing;* but if people pay well for it, they may be secure of the prime article.

We are on a wrong plan you may be sure, and do not consult the greatest happiness of the greatest number. The Chinese practice does so. The offender bribes the judge, and is happy to escape punishment; the judge receives the bribe, and is

happy to put money in his purse; and the offended party only is dissatisfied. Now of these three persons, the offender and the judge constitute a greater number than the man offended, in the proportion of two to one; and, therefore, there can be no question as to the propriety of their being made happy, although at his expense. But, if the offended can bribe higher than the offender,—in other words, if he can afford to pay for a larger slice of justice,—that of course works a radical change in the aspect of affairs; and *he* must have justice then, his due purchase, at the market value.

Chin had more employment than he could well get through among the *élite* of the town in which he resided: he was a clever shaver, and surrounded by sharp blades.

It was in the morning of a certain day of a certain month of a certain year, but of what certain day of what certain month and of what certain year, is neither quite certain now nor in any way important,—the fashionable Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang was submitting his barber's block to the lather and cold steel of the easy-fingered Chin.

"Chin," said he, in the pleasant and familiar tone in which fashionable young sparks address those of inferior condition whom they hope to make useful to themselves,—"Chin," said he, "my old boy, I think I may depend upon you for secrecy and good counsel if I should discourse to you upon a matter of considerable importance to myself."

We are generally ready to trust those who instruct us in the affairs of all our neighbours: the confidence they exhibit in ourselves in intrusting to us the secrets they receive from others seems naturally to challenge our confidence in return.

"You know me well," responded Chin;—"you know my reputation;—I am an iron chest of secrecy, and all come to me as their depository for whatever they would not wish to be known; but, secrecy is a rare virtue, and not to be called into exercise without its equivalent."

A dollar from Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang was admitted as an equivalent for so much secrecy as might be necessary in this affair.

"You must know, Chin," said Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, relieved in mind and purse, (for like his mind, his purse was not well-furnished), "you must know that I am distressingly in love

with a young lady, and can never be at peace until I obtain her to wife. Yet there are some troublesome impediments to our union. In the first place, she loves another; in the second, he loves her; in the third, he is valiant and strong; and in the fourth, she abhors me. You are a clever fellow, Chin,—tell me how to act in this disagreeable state of affairs. The lady's name is Si-Hoo-Se; she is the niece of the old No-Gho, with whom, as her parents are both dead, she has for some years resided. The fame of her beauty has no doubt reached your ears."

"Truly," said Chin, after pondering for some time, and as he began to untie his customer's queue that he might replait it and adorn it with a fresh piece of ribbon;—"truly, in my time I have solved many a knotty point, but the present is a case peculiarly perplexing. I shall, no doubt, find means to overcome the difficulty; but this will not be effected without a somewhat of consideration."

A promise of four taels, if the tonsor would devise an efficient plan, was a somewhat of consideration that sharpened up the inventive wit of Chin: and, after pondering the matter for awhile, he hinted at a scheme, by which the lovely Si-Hoo-Se should be deceived into a marriage with the young libertine.

He proposed to decoy her from her uncle's house by flattering her into a hope of a meeting and elopement with her beloved Long-Ku; when, dressed as Long-Ku, and with a mask upon his face, Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang should present himself before her. Masquerading is a frequent amusement in China, and masks are assumed on a thousand different pretexts. In the present case, Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang was to pretend that he had been ordered by his physician to wear a mask for three days, to benefit his *yin* and *yang** by the suppression of hot humours: and it was not likely his lovely victim would receive this story with suspicion; for in China young ladies are content to leave physical mysteries to be investigated by their lords and masters. He would then have little difficulty in persuading her to a union with himself, for Chin would have prepared her for, and disposed her to this; and it would be time enough for her to discover her mistake after they were indissolubly united.

* See note, X.

This plan gave great satisfaction to Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, and Chin promised to take upon himself the arrangement of all the details: so, turning his customer's head out of hand more quickly than usual, he sallied forth without loss of time, to see some of the other persons whom he meant to make actors in his comedy, and to put all matters in a proper train.

So well was Chin informed upon most people's affairs, that when a statement such as that of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang was laid before him, though he listened to it with attention, it generally happened that he was nearly as fully acquainted with the circumstances as the narrator himself. Thus it occurred in the present instance; and knowing his reputation for directing matters of the kind, and being aware that Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang had not the keenest wit to guide him in the conduct of his concerns, the acute barber was not at all taken by surprise when appeal was made to him for his assistance and advice. Chin, perhaps, at this very time, possessed a clearer knowledge of the matter in all its bearings than did Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang; and as he had undertaken to play the game himself, he considered in what order and in what manner he should move the several pieces. Upon due consideration, he first sought uncle No-Gho; because, to win his confidence and countenance would afford him great facilities for treating with the other parties.

Now, Chin in his time had assisted No-Gho out of some straights and difficulties; and No-Gho could not do otherwise than treat him with familiarity and friendly regard; because such cases might occur again. The barber, therefore, had no obstacles, such as the difference of station might occasion, to obtaining an interview with the mandarin: for No-Gho—we have not before mentioned the fact—was of no less worshipful degree.

It was pleasant to observe, when Chin was performing on a customer, how cleverly and how quickly he mixed his lather—how pleasantly and how abundantly he soaped him over. Albeit, he was "a fellow of exceeding honesty," he had a keener knowledge of the world than for the most part falls to the lot of your exceeding honest men. Gifted with rare shrewdness and observation,

"He knew all qualities, with a learned spirit
Of human dealings—"

and in a majority of cases, even upon a short acquaintance, understood the characters of persons better than they did themselves. He knew when to lay on his brown Windsor, when to tickle with straws, and when to drop a jest or hint into the ear of an attentive patient. If doing the kindness of his office to a female sitter, he would apply the curling-tongs with admirable judgment to the proper moment of a question in dispute, and regulate the exertion of his wrist exactly to the minimum of force requisite to induce her to take the required view of any subject in discussion. We are here, however, only speaking in a general manner of his ability; for in the case immediately under our notice, his conversation with the mandarin, though he acquitted himself ably, it was with no great exercise of his ingenuity and tact; since No-Gho was exactly in the state of mind to fall in with the plans the wily barber had to offer to his consideration.

The mandarin himself had never in any manner opposed the union of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang with his ward and niece; so that Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, in enumerating the difficulties in his way, did not include that frequent and perplexing one, an unkind guardian. Fair Si-Hoo-Se was heiress to a considerable property, which was at present, in great measure, under the management of her uncle No-Gho; and he had made terms with his young friend Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, by which, in case of the marriage of that proper person with his niece, he should reserve to himself a considerable slice out of the patrimony of Si-Hoo-Se. The mandarin, therefore, far from opposing it, was extremely desirous that a marriage should take place between his niece and Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang; but he was unable to overcome the repugnance of Si-Hoo-Se; and he did not venture to attempt compulsion, as he knew that if the case should get into the courts of law, the young lady would be able to out-bribe himself.

Now, No-Gho had a daughter of his own, of whom he was solicitous to dispose advantageously; but Win-Fu was ill-favoured, and of unpleasing temper; and no one had hitherto

made overtures to take her from her father's house. The old man, however, had never for a moment contemplated uniting her with Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang; for, though he had reasons of his own that attached him to that young estimable, he could not place in him such confidence, nor entertain for him such respect, as would render agreeable to parental feeling the idea of devoting to him an only daughter: paternal affection for Win-Fu, was one of the few virtues possessed by the old mandarin.

But Long-Ku was a person of good family, and of what was more important in the eyes of No-Gho, of good fortune; and in addition to these extraneous graces, was accomplished, and of such moral character and polite manners as engaged the esteem and regard of all. Him had No-Gho mentally elected as his future son-in-law; and he had encouraged his daughter to conceive a romantic affection for this young man; which the dutiful Win-Fu imagined that she had in due course done.

No-Gho and Chin conversed familiarly together, until, each partly enlightening the other, they had both a pretty clear understanding of the present feelings, desires, and relative position of the rest of the dramatis personæ; and then Chin proceeded to narrate (with some reservation) what had passed between himself and Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang. He solicited the ancient gentleman to permit his niece to go forth, at a time which he would fix, to a particular spot beside the river, whereto she might be attracted by the hope of meeting Long-Ku: but he intimated that she should instead be accosted by Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang; who, impersonating Long-Ku, would prevail upon her to fly with him, that they might enter together upon the agreeable estate of matrimony. Chin was confident that no scruples upon the lady's part would be so stubborn as to thwart them in the execution of this project; and No-Gho rather inclined to a coincidence with him in opinion. Chin proposed further, when he had adroitly sounded the old man so as to be sure that the suggestion would not be disagreeable to him, that an appointment should be made likewise for the real Long-Ku; and that he should be deceived into the hope of meeting his beloved Si-Hoo-Se, and carrying her away, a willing bride, to his house. The place named for their encounter might be one different from that to which Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang was to be

directed, and at which Si-Hoo-Se was to be in waiting; but it was ingeniously devised by Chin, that Win-Fu, in the disguise of her cousin, meeting the devoted and expectant Long-Ku, and suffering herself to be carried off by him, should become his wife before the mistake could be discovered. This plot presented some little difficulties, not the least of which was that which would arise from the necessary determination on the lady's part, to retain her veil till the marriage ceremonies were concluded: against such a resolve an impatient lover might be expected to raise a demurrer; but Chin engaged to furnish her with excuses such as must satisfy young Long-Ku; and No-Gho had the fullest confidence in the inventive genius of Chin. The old gentleman promised the barber fair opportunities of disposing the ladies to perform their due parts in the comedy; and the tonsor did not leave him till he had obtained a pleasant bonus for the exertions he was making to arrange matters in accordance with the wishes of the mandarin.

There is an idea prevalent in our own country, it is at least very general among the young, that love affairs may be more pleasantly, and even properly arranged, without the intervention of third parties. Papa, indeed, just makes a few soundlings to be sure that there is no bar in the river: and then away the young brace boat it,

"Youth at the bow and pleasure at the helm,"

and steer their own course, and row at their own fancy, whilst no other party "puts in an oar;" mamma, however, sitting at her window, with spectacles on nose, to see that they do not get into any danger. But in the Felicitous Land, the juvenile couple rarely attempt to manage the boat themselves: they find it less troublesome to let some uncle No-Gho pull the oars, some Chin, the barber, steer. We have heard of a Mussulman's surprise at seeing, in a western country, people of consideration toiling through a dance: his inquiry whether they might not hire professional persons to perform it for them, may appear to us ridiculous; but not half so much so as our voluntary kicking of the toes to him. The Chinese carry their passive philosophy yet further than the Mussulman, and will not waste their

valuable time in making love, which is everywhere acknowledged to be but profitless employ, when it can be done so cheaply and so easily by proxy. It was for this reason that the intervention of Chin excited little marvel and no indignation among the many individuals he had to address in the due arrangement of the affairs in question. All looked upon him at once as a professional agent,—he had long been celebrated as a go-between in similar cases,—and all were ready to accord him some little tangible compliment, which he was not backward to require at the hands of each.

Chin was next admitted to a private interview with Win-Fu; and though that lady affected extreme unwillingness to perform the part marked out for her in these proceedings, and make great play with her fan during her colloquy with the barber, it was sufficiently evident to his acute perceptions, that she was ready almost to jump out of her skin with delight. She made a handsome present to the master of the ceremonies, for the kind anxiety he exhibited to provide her with an agreeable partner; and though she persisted that she would rather not have been implicated in the matrimonial quadrille, she declared her unwillingness to interfere with the formation of the set from a selfish regard to her own preferences; and therefore left the further disposition of affairs in the excellent hands in which she found them. Chin named the spot to which she should repair, disguised in the attire of Si-Hoo-Se; and having accomplished the drill of Win-Fu, next sought a conference with her fairer cousin.

Here Chin had a more difficult task to perform, for the scruples of Si-Hoo-Se were many and sincere, and it needed all his eloquence and ingenuity in argument to overcome them; though it must be confessed that the prospects he held out were in themselves so agreeable to his lovely listener, that she had a greater disposition than she was perhaps aware of, to construe his rhetoric in the most favourable manner. Suffice it to say, however, that the barber succeeded in the two objects he had in view,—persuading the lady, and obtaining a gratuity.

It was now the hour—but, stop; this mingling of the present *now* with the past *it was* is the poetical form of determining the

time; never mind; as we have wetted our shoes in the Castalian waters, let us fairly in—head over heels—in all our toggery. Ah me! how pleasant are the Delphic streams!

'Twas now the hour when through the streets
The watchman's noisy gong resounds;
And boatman's drum the sound repeats,
Whilst ceaseless din the air confounds:
The hour that stills small children's cries,
And man's stern cares assuages;
When dogs are folded in their sties,
And kittens in their cages.
'Twas now the hour when those who sail in junks,
Think of sweet friends they leave as oft as comes cruise;
Of debts unpaid to some old greedy hunks,
Of 'scaped bamboos, and ankle-screws and thumb-screws.*
Amida Buddha! 'tis the hour of wooings!
Amida Buddha! 'tis the hour of frolics!
Amida Buddha! 'tis the hour of doings
That best become your pastorals and bucolics.
It is the hour of mirth's outflow,
When dinner's done and girdles loosed;
When fishermen their nets forego,
And ducks are whistled home to roost;†
When sun-beams gild pagodas' tops,
And smokers crowd the opium shops.

In fact, it is that delightful hour of the evening when the sun hath just set, is setting, or is about to set,—when the moon hath just risen, is rising, or is about to rise:

When stars are shining, or about to shine;
When owls are dining, or about to dine;
When wine-cups are foaming, or about foam;
When wild beasts are roaming, or about to roam;

* Era già l'ora che volge 'l desio
A' naviganti, e intenerisce il core
Lo dì ch' han detto a' dolci amici Addio.—DANTE.

† See note, Y.

When young hearts are bounding, or about to bound;
When young steps are sounding, or about to sound;
When young forms are greeting, or about to greet;
When young lips are meeting, or about to meet.

Who is it that sits in a romantic nook on the banks of the pelucent Slum, contemplating through the net-work of an exquisitely embroidered gauze veil, the quiet beauty of the scene, as the shadows of the evening are stealing over it? Who, oh who but the ever fair, the ever adorable Si-Hoo-Se? But what doth she there at the dying-time of day, alone among the thick bushes, attired in holiday trim, such as could not be necessary to the full enjoyment of any pleasant solitude?

"Will he come?" she said; "and has not the barber deceived me?"—

She seized her guitar, and ran her fingers over the chords: and in a voice of pathos the most touching of which she was capable, sung the words which follow: they had been composed some centuries before, in anticipation of her individual case; but heroines are always prepared in this manner with songs for every emergency.

O come, O come
To the banks of the Slum,
Where the waters flow
So fair to behold,
And the mud, in the glow,
Seems as yellow as gold:
O come, O come,
To the banks of the Slum.

O come, O come,
Where the murmuring hum
Of the wave keeps tune
To your love's fond lays,
Beneath the cold moon,
As she warbles and plays.
O come, O come
To the slow-flowing Slum;

And press my lips till you make me dumb:
Oh, take me, my life, and make me your wife;
We are born to be kissed, so I shall not resist;
And with sugar the rest of our days shall be rife.

The crickets around her sang out in shrill accompaniment; the bats flitted and wheeled above her, and mosquitoes danced fantastically before her veil; yet she paid little attention to the crickets, the bats, or the mosquitoes. But, hark!—there is a tread of feet; the sprays of the light bamboo are shaken; a graceful figure presses through them, and at a moment when his pigtail is entangled in the boughs, the moon shines full upon him. "It is my own dear Long-Ku!" exclaimed she, and her first impulse was to faint away: but several considerations occurred to her immediately, which made her doubt the policy and propriety of this; and she sat collectedly, therefore, to await his approach.

The youth is at her side; he is whispering to her; and never sounded voice in her ear so sweetly, so persuasively. If we were telling you some European love story, we should, perhaps, talk of "those familiar accents;" but, in consequence of the peculiar restrictions which interfere with the intercourse of the young in China, it may frequently happen there that the voice may have all the charm of novelty, even when an attachment has been of long standing. It necessarily results from the Celestial system—(we do not mean from the system of the universe, but from the system to which we have adverted above, as existent in the Celestial Empire,—though, no doubt, it belongs likewise to the ordinance of the stars,)—it necessarily results from the Celestial system that in the category of love cases, love at first sight is that of the most frequent occurrence: for, when we have no time for blockade, or regular siege, what course is open but to take our towns by storm? The fond couple at present under our consideration had little acquaintance with each other; and though the young lady had long entertained an ardent affection for Long-Ku, never till then had she sat so near him; she had seen him only, and that rarely, at some distance, and she never before had heard the breath issue, in sweet modulation, from his lips. How great then must have been her satisfaction, whatever

appearance of coyness she might assume, when his winged accents, fraught with all the honey of love, came with their pleasing buzz, to find themselves a hive in her ear!

Alas! poor Si-Hoo-Se! she does not, as you do, reader, penetrate through the disguise of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, and perceive that he whom she looks upon as her dearest friend, is, in fact, the person she most abhors! However, since they converse as lovers, we will not intrude upon an interview which is meant to be so secret. The young pair did not at the moment suspect that any witnessed their meeting; but the barber Chin was behind a bush close by. It cannot be right to imitate his example, and listen to vows and protestations we have no business to hear. Suffice that, though the maid was coy, it was agreed between them that they should wed that evening; but it was a point for further question, where, and how they should effect this desirable purpose.

Clandestine marriages do sometimes take place in China; but, as, from the constitution of Chinese society, they are much less frequent than with us, so they are proportionably discountenanced; and a woman who has had the imprudence to resort to such means of changing her estate from singularity to duplicity, is very sternly regarded by the prudent of her own sex, and the rigid ones of ours.

The young lady was anxious, in order to save appearances, that the marriage should take place at No-Gho's house: the young man, on the contrary, fearful that such a sudden and secret arrangement might not be agreeable to the old mandarin, and that some impediment might be thrown in the way of the fulfilment of their wishes, was desirous that it should occur at his own. At her urgent instances, however, and her repeated assurances that it would not be disagreeable to No-Gho, he would perhaps have conceded the point, had they not been interrupted by the sudden intrusion of Chin.

That individual confessed, without hesitation, that having effected for them the present meeting, he considered it right to keep an eye upon the progress of events; and that he had, therefore, been a witness of their conference. He strongly recommended that they should make all sure by a private performance first of the ceremonies necessary to render marriage binding;

especially as the most important of these, the stepping over a pot of charcoal, would be more properly effected at the husband's door than elsewhere. It was his advice, however, that they should repair immediately afterwards to the uncle's house, and have things ratified there, so as to avoid scandal. He gave such good reasons for what he recommended, that the lady considered it safest to accede to his proposal; so returning to her sedan, which she had left among the trees at some distance, she allowed Chin to be its conductor, and direct the bearers to the door of her betrothed. There she was met by the eager lover, who having, previous to their meeting, considered as a thing of course that this would be the plan pursued, had invited some friends and matrons of his acquaintance to witness the performance of the customary ceremonies. These, in that ceremonious land, could not be hurried over in very brief time; and Chin did not remain there, as he had other pipes to smoke.

The barber made similar arrangements respecting the marriage of the other young people. He had so timed them, and he so timed himself, that he had a glimpse at their first meeting also. It was not without some reason that Chin had gained the reputation among his neighbours of possessing a faculty of ubiquity. As soon as he had disposed of these, he was at No-Gho's house.

He congratulated the old mandarin upon the success that had attended their plot; and prepared him to expect the newly-married couples at his house that evening. No-Gho was delighted with the barber's ingenuity, and deigned to pledge him in several bumpers of wine; each cup of which inereased his satisfaction, and made him more gracious and condescending. Preparations were made for a merry evening, and musicians and dramatic performers were called in; and even before the arrival of the persons who were looked for with so much glee, some little rehearsal of festivities began. Perceiving the gratifying effect which wine had upon the social feelings of the old gentleman, Chin was determined that these should not be without their stimulus; and No-Gho was in a condition of much pleasantry when, amid the hum of curiosity and gratulation from the assembled guests, the first of the newly-married couples, the two whose meeting we witnessed by the banks of the slow-

creeping Slum, came bowing, and were bowed into the chamber.

It was natural that Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, as he still retained his mask and impersonated his rival, should manifest a disposition to keep in the dimmest corners of the room; and that the greeting, which politeness made it incumbent upon him to offer to his host, should be performed as hurriedly as possible. It is true, it would be of no great consequence if his disguise were detected now; yet he was not disposed to reveal himself at once; he wished rather to wait some fitting moment, and then, with triumphant audacity, declare the course he had pursued. But whatever anxiety he felt was quite without occasion; for No-Gho was so far gone in the ways of felicity, that, presently after, he was conveyed to bed, in a state of perfect abstraction from all the cares of life.

Now the bagpipers grew busy, and the lutists twanged the strings with their long nails, and the flutists piped away till their pigtails stood on end,—bladders croning, parchment groaning, cat-gut squeaking, metal moaning! and all was proceeding in the merriest manner, Chin acting as the master of the ceremonies, when a stir was heard outside the chamber, a rustle of pigtails and a klop-klop of ladies feet. The doors were opened, and attended by a considerable number of friends of both sexes, the second felicitous couple of the evening attracted general observation as they were ushered into the apartment.

"Hey-kok-ko-loh-rum," cried one of the guests, who had been pledging the mandarin freely in wine and sam-shoo,—"What have we here? Another bridegroom, yet the same, as sure as pigs wear pigtails! if not, I have a gift of seeing double." It is not unlikely that the wedding guest may at the moment have possessed that faculty; but he was not indebted thereto for the twin images of Long-Ku that then fell upon his retina.

The lovely bride of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang, whose attention had been for some moments diverted from what was going forward in the apartment, by a whispered conversation with her lord, directed her eyes, as she heard the exclamation of the wedding guest, towards the real Long-Ku; and uttering a shriek, as she perceived the manner in which she had been duped, she tottered into the arms of her attendants. Upon this occasion she fainted

outright, her cheek assuming a sable hue, as is the custom in her country in such cases; and though they cut instantly the laces of her shoes, and smoked a tobacco-pipe beneath her nose, it was long ere they could succeed in restoring animation.

Her husband chuckled with delight, and with a feeling of triumph; and when she had partly recovered, he approached, and taking her hand, "My dearest Si-Hoo-Se," he said, "my ever beloved wife,—you have made some little mistake, as sure as Fo's in Fo-kien. You reckoned on a prize, but you have obtained a richer one than you expected. It is of no use any longer to keep up this disguise. And if ever ill-luck should so arrange it that you should become a widow, let me recommend you never, in future, to take a husband in a mask. This face, as you were aware, if not my face; this pigtail, as you are now aware, is not my pigtail; this dress is not my dress. You took me for Long-Ku; it was a slight mistake: but make yourself happy, and congratulate yourself that you have caught no worse than Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang." As he said this he removed his mask.

"My dear Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang," responded the lady, in a tone of subdued malice, "my ever beloved husband, you have made some little mistake, as sure as there's folk in Fo-kien. You reckoned on a prize, but you have obtained a richer one than you expected. It is of no use any longer to keep up this disguise; and if ever, which Fo forfend, you should become a widower, let me recommend you never in future to take a wife beneath a veil. This veil, you must know, is not my veil; these boots are not my boots; these trousers are not my trousers. You took me for Si-Hoo-Se; it was a slight mistake; but make yourself happy, and congratulate yourself that you have caught no worse than Win-Fu."

As she spoke the last word, she lifted her veil, and exhibited to her dismayed husband a physiognomy the most uninviting.

Scarce a pigtail in the room but was convulsed with laughter. The drummer beat in the head of his drum with delight; the fifer blew his fife into a thousand splinters; Chin ground his teeth to powder with a grin; the attendant ladies stamped off the heels of their little boots in their merry satisfaction; Long-Ku laughed till he had broken all his laces; and Si-Hoo-Se,

who, by the suggestion of Chin, (for Chin was unwilling that Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang should prematurely discover his mistake,) had assumed the dress of Win-Fu, now threw aside her veil, and exhibiting laughter in its loveliest phase, supported herself by clinging to her husband's pigtail, lest she should fall to the ground with cachinnation. This subitaneous overflow of mirthfulness was occasioned chiefly by the mingled expression of mortification, rage, and astonishment, in the countenance of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang. Nobody esteemed, admired, or regarded either Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang or Win-Fu; and it was a source of the keenest gratification to those who stood around them, to see how both, scheming to outwit others, had thus outwitted themselves. Chin had provided against any interruption to the general satisfaction, by being careful that none of the few familiar friends of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang or Win-Fu should be among the persons invited to the wedding.

Old No-Gho, we have seen, had lost all opportunity of participating in the joke at the time; and he was exceedingly vexed when he heard the state of the case, on the following morning. Chin assured him, however, that there had merely been a misunderstanding; that the affair was unlucky, but could not be helped; that the black dragon of the neighbouring river must have had a chop-stick in the pudding; that there was no mending matters now; and that the way to grow fat, (a great desideratum with a China-man, and particularly with a mandarin,) was to laugh abundantly, and drown dull care. His eloquence somewhat soothed if it did not satisfy the ancient gentleman; but he had more trouble to subdue the tempest of Ou-Rang-Ou-Tang's indignation. That young person could hardly be brought to believe that by mere accident the barber had directed him to the wrong spot to meet his beloved: but though his wrath was greatly aroused, Chin succeeded in obtaining from him a present of five more taels for concealing those parts of the story that were known only to themselves. To his engagement on this subject, Chin always most conscientiously and scrupulously adhered: never imparting to man, woman, or child, though often importuned to do so, one syllable upon the question; excepting upon promises of the strictest secrecy, and the receipt of a proportionable fee.

From that time forth Chin enjoyed an honourable situation in the family of Long-Ku; and it may not be uninteresting to the ladies to be informed that in due time he shaved the heads of four-and-twenty little Long-Kus.

# THE STUDENT OF HANLAN:

## A TALE OF OPIUM-SMOKING.*

Wee-Ping-Wa-Ling-Tuh-Ye Kum
Hoo-be-Pi-Ping Ho-Pi-Hum.†—Hoo-Kah.

Oh, the gentle Fum-Fum was a worshipful youth,
A student of talent, of trust, and of truth!
Of excellent parentage,
Wit with an arrant edge,
Eloquence burning,
And subtle discerning;
Of manners most excellent,
Formed to enchant;
And when to the sex he leant,
Gay and gallant.
As fat as a pig,
And as sleek as a Cadi;
As fresh as a fig,
And as fair as a lady.
In learning he beat all competitors hollow;
And, in short,

* Pi-Ping, an eminent modern poet of China, wrote a series of poems with the excellent design of warning his countrymen against the vices which most prevailed amongst them. From these we have selected the one devoted to the subject of Opium-Smoking; but we have found it impossible to preserve, in an English version, the epic gravity and high moral dignity of tone that characterize the serious poetry of the Chinese. It may give additional interest to the subject to mention, that the author died but a few years since, of the pernicious habit he deprecates; having sought inspiration from the pipe whilst engaged in the composition of this poem.

† These lines contain a beautiful moral reflection and warning, applicable to this story; but are printed in the original language, from having baffled every attempt at translation.

Was a sort
Of a pig-tailed Apollo.
He could tell you by heart
Any part
Of the works of the sages
Who shined in past ages,
Meng-tze, Laou-tze, and Confucius;
And of all whom the Muse
Of the Central Land
Imbues
With her dews,
Up to this very day—
A great many they,
But I only name one or two she has.
There's excellent Nin-Kum,
Whose pen makes the tin come,
And Hum-Drum the poet, who has no great income,
(For income and ink-'em
Although we may clink 'em,
Are not such first cousins as perhaps you may think 'em.)
There's Ly the historian, and Bo the philosopher;
Si lost his mistress, and weeps for the loss of her;
Flum, Skum, and Hum—but all these we will pass over,
Some are yet living, and some grows green grass over.
There's Fang the great critic,
With pen analytic,
And Sting, an ingenious satirical writer;
Slo, Lo, and Co, the political journalists;
Yawn, known because of his
Moral philosophies,
Sensible works which he's welcome to learn who lists;
And Fun, Pun, and Grin, whose effusions are lighter.
There are authors besides of wit, learning, and passion;
But, above all that ever yet wrote or sang,
The writer just now at the top of the fashion,
Is elegant, moral, and eloquent Slang.

But here we digress, and mishaps may enmesh us,
Whilst wasting our moments so few and so precious.

At all times it's right to "take Time by the queue,"
So let us return to Fum-Fum and pursue.
With so much learning, taste, and knowledge
You easily may suppose
To what distinguished rank he rose
Among the youth at college.
Hanlan College, Peking,*
Is that of which we 're speaking:
Nor was there another student
In all the imperial city
So proper at once and prudent,
So clever, and wise, and witty.
Nay, only one besides was there,
Who might with him in the least compare—
A reader was he for a doctor's degree,
A foe to Fum-Fum, and his name Fee-Fee.

Fee-Fee and Fum-Fum were inveterate foes,
Not only because they were bent to oppose
Each other in contests for classical prizes—
And that fair renown that from learning arises;
But also because, as they both of them saw,
So they both fell in love with the lovely Faw-Faw.

Oh, the lovely Faw-Faw was the loveliest maid
In all the Celestial Land;
With her brows' lovely bend, and her queue's lovely braid,
And those sweet little claws on her hand!
With her little coatee, so delightful to see,
And her trousers so artfully planned;
Eyes like cockatoo's, and such dear little shoes,
In which not a fairy might stand!
Oh happy the youth (for him Fortune, in truth,
Hath a white page without any blot,)
To whom it occurs that his pigtail with hers
Shall be tied in a true lover's knot.

* See note, Z.

Fum-Fum and Fee-Fee—Oh, how each of them sighed,
And wished for the lovely Faw-Faw as his bride!
Into loneliest corners all moodily drew,
And neglected his studies, his dress, and his queue.
Yet of slovenly manners, O lovers, beware!
If ye seek in your nets to entangle the fair,
The whole of your art in your dress ye should use,
And take the best care of your P's and your Queues.
But Fum-Fum and Fee-Fee, how could they but discover
The passion of their hearts to the worthy old Fo-Fo,
The father of Faw-Faw, who was seeking for a lover,
To give his girl away to, since off she must go?
For 'tis not the practice, within the Central Land,
To keep such household chattels as daughters dear, on hand,
But to sell them at a discount, because it's very clear,
That they eat their heads in provender where food is all so dear.

And therefore, old Fo-Fo, he would not say "No, no,"
To the offers of Fum-Fum, or the proffers of Fee-Fee:
But he asked a little while just to see how things might go,
Before he should determine whose the lady was to be.

And he promised that that one should be in law his son,
Who should reap the largest honours in learning's ample field;
Who should pluck the golden crown from the forehead of renown;
To him, and to him only, his daughter he would yield.
And so Fum-Fum, and so Fee-Fee,
They hated each other as much as could be:
They hated each other as much as could be,
And either would see, with exceeding much glee,
His hated co-rival brought down on his knee,
To do some great penance, to bear some great shame,
That should lose him all hope of the beautiful dame.

Now we know not whether you may know, but there is a certain festival,
That is held once in three years, at the College of Hanlan:
Examinations then take place, whereby to choose the best of all,
Among the young collegians who do the best they can.
Excitement 'mong all parties then rises to a high zest,
Then Messrs. the professors, each strives to look the wisest;
Then parents come, and all is hum and bustle in the capital,
And boobies gaze as lanterns blaze, and flags and pennons flap it all.
The Emperor, that temperer of the mortar of society,
Whose edicts serve so well to keep the frame of things together,
Who trowels up the state with such prudence and propriety,
And watches it, and botches it in times of evil weather;
Sits on his throne of state, with his councillors about him,
Who never must presume at all to contradict or doubt him;
Who seek to please him first, before or gods or little fishes,
And never recommend a thing but what they know he wishes.

The Emperor he sits
Upon his throne of state,
To mark the exercise of wits
In thesis or debate;
And every young collegian
Of all the Central Region,

Receives the royal command to
Do the best he can do.

And this triennial festival was drawing near at hand,
And many young competitors to gain its prizes planned,
Whose hearts were beating high with hope or sinking with misdoubtings,
As often as they thought upon the innings and the outings.
Fum-Fum, among them all was the sharpest and the learnedest,
(As far as, ere the trial, anybody could discern, id est,)
But being a tea-totaller, he suffered in his nerves so much,
He scarce could hope to gain a prize, although he might deserve so much;
For trepidations frequently will set the brain a turning,
And self-possession often wins what should be won by learning.
And next to him, Fee-Fee
Was the likeliest man to be
At the top of all the tree, the glorious tree of learning;
He knew the different pages
Of the books of ancient sages,
Who illumined former ages with the rays of their discerning;
And as with modest timorousness he was not aught afflicted,
That he should bear the prizes off, by many was predicted.

Therefore Fum-Fum was despondent excessively,
And felt the thing weigh on his feelings oppressively;
His brow was all day puckered up in a frown,
And ever his *pig*tail hung *sheep*ishly down.
This was foolish we own,
And he ought to have shown
A greater amount of self-confident ease;
He ought to—but lauk!
It's so easy to talk,
Whilst, to tell you the fact,
It's much harder to act;
And funk is, we fancy, a sort of disease;

Good wine, to be sure,
Is its very best cure;
But tea we should think
The worst thing you could drink:
And the fact may be proved by plain argumentations,
Because the Chinese are the funkiest of nations.

The day was drawing nearer when Fum-Fum ought to win
A most abundant harvest of both renown and tin;
Of both renown and tin, for we'd have you understand,
Those are not incompatible in that Celestial Land.

But still he grew more nervous,
(So Fortune loves to serve us,)
And felt his fears would nail him,
In spite of all his heed of it;
And that his heart would fail him,
Just when he had most need of it—
Unless he could discover some artificial means
Of keeping up his courage, when he came before the skreens.

Now, we cannot tell how the case might be,
When you were reading for your degree,
But we know how numbers seek
To nerve both mind and body;
Depending—for Latin and Greek—
Upon cold-without and toddy;
Those are capital things to fill the skin,
And cold-without makes warm within.

"White spirits and black,
Red spirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You that mingle may."
Though some people think that without any mingling,
Pure spirit produces a pleasanter tingling.
The spirit of rice, which is called "Sam-shoo,"
Was the only spirit that Fum-Fum knew:
It's a sort of a grey spirit, sparkling and frisky,
And bears a resemblance to Irish whisky.

But Fum-Fum disliked it extremely,
And held it not proper or seemly
To sharpen his wit's very clever edge
By any such species of beverage.
Oh, Fum-Fum, beware! for the case will be more dire,
If, when you shun the frying-pan, you fall into the fire.

The night was dark and dreadful—
Of horrors it had fed full;
The rain came down a deluge,
The rattling hail-stones fell huge;
And the lightning flames were glancing,
Like fiery demons dancing;
And the thunder peals were rolling,
As the knell of earth were tolling;
And all the broad black river
Was in such fume and fever,
As though the great black dragon, he
Were writhing in an agony.
And Peking's lords and spouses
Were mostly in their houses;
For few, your may imagine it, without compulsory reason,
Would wish to be abroad in such a hideous season.

But Fum-Fum all day had been studying Slang,
And feeling oppressed,
And wanting some rest,
He put by his books in the afternoon—
He put by his books with a bit of a pang,
And forth he must fare,
For a gulp of fresh air,
But intending of course to be back again soon—
To be back again soon,
After tasting the boon,
Which hard-reading students,
A class of imprudents,
So seldom enjoy, having no time to spare,
Of bodily needments
To take the due heedments,
And feeling the carcase no part of their care.

He was hastening back when the storm
Began in an ominous form,
With a distant growl, and a few big drops,
Such as make all the passengers run into shops,
And promote the sale of umbrellas and pattens,
To save their silks, and crapes, and satins.
We like to observe when storms begin,
How the folks run helter-skelter,
In search of the nearest shelter;
And sometimes make a blunder
In the roofs they are entering under.

Rain-water (whose reasons of course must be fallacies)
Hath decoyed your tea-totaller into gin-palaces;
When, nevertheless, you must know very well he meant
But to seek some relief from too much of the *element*.
Made haughty lords stand among groups of low sots,
And proud ladies visit the poor in their cots:
And induced your grave magistrate into mine uncle's,
Without any prupose to pawn his carbuncles,
Though your worshipful friend, whom so much thou reverest,
Hath a set of nose jewels the rarest and queerest.
It hath brought your good pastor to pray in a chapel he
Else would have looked on extremely unhappily;
And as all will be swift to get out of the lurch,
Hath drawn your fell schismatics into the church.
But, as touching Fum-Fum,—on his way to his home,
He was caught in the storm, and he wished to get out of it,
Because he could tell from the darkness full well,
That it would not pass over without a fair bout of it:
And Fum-Fum was frightened
Whenever it lightened;
And didn't like thunder, or hail-stones, or waterspouts:
He wasn't a buck
Of such nerve and such pluck,
As should make him defy
The wrath of the sky, [spouts.
Or go where waves roar and the red stream of slaughter

It can't be expected
That persons connected

With quiet pursuits, such as science and learning,
Should take much delight
In the fury and fright,
Where elements clash, or the battle is burning.

Therefore Fum-Fum looked round to find
A house, to escape from the rain and wind;
And what should he see,
Close under his lee,
But a bamboo-skreen hanging down before
The neighbouring door,
Which seemed contrived to balk the wet,
Which came down thicker and heavier yet;
So, lifting it up, in his fear to be sopped,
Speedily into the house he popped.

Alas! that Fum-Fum did not know
That the bamboo-skreen before the door,
Him thus provoking to shun a good soaking,
Oh, sign of woe! was meant to show
That *there* dwelt a similar spirit to Fo,*
The spirit of opium smoking.—
The spirit of abstraction,
The spirit of inaction,
The spirit of delusion,
The spirit of confusion,
The spirit of inanity,
The spirit of insanity,
Of life without reality,
Of living-dead vitality.

When he found himself in an opium shop,
He didn't, of course, much like to stop;
But then again, it was equally true,
That he didn't much like to get wet through;
Moreover, he didn't much like to stay
Without having something for which he might pay;
So he gave his mouth a back-hand wipe,
"Well, once in my life, I'll try a pipe:

* See note, *A*.

By Fortune thus sent here,
I think I may venture;
For, as to my e'er being brought to smoke opium,
Though many would do it,
And afterwards rue it,
I'm rather too wise for it—faith I should hope I am."
So he threw off his hat,
And down he sat,
With a hand on his hip,
On a bamboo mat;
Put a pipe in his lip,
And began to flip
The flies away with his pigtail's tip.
He stared round the room,
Through the thick curling fume,
To know all about both his where and with whom;
And he saw some strange faces,
With hideous grimaces;
Some mocing and mopping,
And some with jaws dropping;
Some looking most wise,
With their green sunken eyes;
Some fretful, some foolish,
Some ghastly and ghoulish:
Some half-naked skeletons, livid and green,
Whose stagnated blood left no life in their mien;
With lips drawn awry, and gums shrunken and blue,
And their teeth, black and yellow, thrust forth in full view:
And with minds in the last rags of idiotcy cloaked,
These their horrible appetites feebly provoked
With the dregs of the poison that others had smoked.

When thou wouldst, O death, carouse,
Bind the poppy round thy brows;
Bind it round with bony glee;
'Tis the fittest wreath for thee!
Toadstools, and nightshades, and darnels,
Mould-mosses fatted in charnels,

Hemlocks, and henbanes, and aconites,
Witch-gathered deep in the black o' nights,
Though they be poisons of dignity,
Match not the poppy's malignity.
Though death be a Proteus of horrible shapes,
His worst forms beside be but second-rate copies,
Of those wherein under his grey bones he drapes
When he 'noints
His old joints
With his unguents of poppies.

'Twas a fearful sight and well might yield
A warning to the student;
And here morality opes a field;
But we shall not intrude in 't.
If we show you were her grounds begin,
And give you leave to sport therein,
You will think that quite enough, no doubt,
And not ask us to measure them out.
But, strange to say, the sight he saw,
Though it filled him quite with horror and awe,
Had not the effect,
We so well might expect,
Of making him loosen the pipe from his jaw;
But he smoked away
At his yard of clay,
Or his piece of bamboo, we rather should say,
As though it were pleasant
To him to be present
At a scene such as that we have just been depicting,
Where still with worse horrors were horrors conflicting.

When Fum-Fum had finished, he found
His brains spin pleasantly round,
And he seemed to be floating through oceans
Of pleasantest fancies and notions.
He rose, and walked off in delightful excitement,
And thought he before never knew what delight meant;

Like wheels running down on a gentle declivity,
His memory was in such a state of activity,
That the works of great Slang he remembered each word of
And knew books by heart he had not even heard of.
And his nerves, too, got into such excellent trim,
That he felt he had courage to look very grim,
If the Emperor's self should look crossly at him.

On the following morning, however,
He felt himself funkier than ever;
The simplest lessons he couldn't say through,
And he got three cuts from his master's queue.
This made him despond
"Beyond beyond,"
And inclined him almost to jump into the pond:
But he afterwards thought he might find some relief
In an opium pipe, for his dulness and grief;
And what could it hurt, if he smoked but a wee,
Just to keep up his pluck, till he passed his degree?
'Twas the sensible part,
If only because
It might gain such a heart
As the lovely Faw-Faw's.
More rational still,
Because it should kill
Every hope that might be
In the foolish Fee-Fee.
So Fum-Fum smoked his pipe with particular glee.

At last came the day so desired and feared;
At last came the day, and the daylight appeared.
All Peking flocked in to the learned rehearsal,
And hubbub and hurry became universal.
The tailors were busy the week before,
In mending old dresses and making more;
And now all the barbers were so in demand,
There was scarcely enough to be found in the land;
What with shaving the heads of man, woman, and lad,
You'd have fancied, i' faith, all the world had gone mad;

There was shaving of heads and plaiting of queues,
And painting fair cheeks of all beautiful hues;
There was tinting of nails and squeezing of feet,
For who but would wish to look handsome and neat,
When the whole of the city was forth in the street?

On his throne of high state sat the Emperor bold,
Like "X with his legs across" cross-legged sat he;
And his ladies were near him, so fair to behold,
But in small wicker cages that no one might see.
And six pairs of spectacles, ranged on each side,
Formed a spectacle proper to kindle his pride;
For behind every pair sat a councillor keen,
With a nose of great gravity peeping between.
The pastors and masters, the doctors and proctors,
Of learning's great digest the learned concoctors,
Were ranged in due order; and next on the boards,
Were the small mandarins, with their buttons and swords;
Then the parents and uncles, and guardians of students,
Had their part of the floor just marked out by a few dents;
And last came the scholars, so proud of their knowledge
Of morals, and rhetoric, and history its big tales;
Whilst the great court was filled up in front of the college,
With rag-tag and bob-tail, all bobbing their pigtails.

The spectacles put on their learnedest looks,
And the orators spoke like printed books;
Joy was in flower and wisdom ripe,
And the Emperor smiled as he smoked his pipe:
The Emperor smiled as the crew he scanned,
To think what learning was in his land;
For there was not a student, the least in size,
But had got his head stuffed with the works of the wise;
So that each of their heads, to his fancy's view,
Seemed a book full of print, with a mark for the queue.
Well! some heads are books to hold learning—but, marry,
Know as much as do books of the learning they carry.

At last they began, sir:
The trial was hard,

And question and answer
Played thrust and guard;

Some fumbled, and stumbled, and tumbled; then mumbled,
And grumbled because their ideas were jumbled,
Whereby all at once they were painfully humbled,
And hope's handsome fabric so cruelly crumbled:
And some got on better by muttering and stuttering,
And sputtering as though their tongues wanted a buttering,
With muscles all twitching and pigtails all fluttering,
And big drops of heat from their foreheads down guttering,—
For no one could make out the words they were uttering.

But at last came the turns of Fee-Fee and Fum-Fum,
And there rose a great hum when the folks saw them come,
For the tongue of report had by no means been dumb;
She had whispered to some, or made signs with her thumb,
And at other times spoke out as loud as a drum,
And had told of the pair,
Of their learning so rare,
And besides of their rivalry touching the fair.
Fee-Fee stepped forth with confidence, collected quite and cool;
He knew himself, if not the best, the second best at school;
And he knew his rival, poor Fum-Fum, at other times his match,
Was likely to break down with funk when he came up to the [scratch

But Fum-Fum had been smoking well his opium pipe that morn,
And so could speak as free and bold as any man that's born;
And looked with scorn on rivalry so paltry as Fee-Fee's,
For he thought himself the better man by numberless degrees.

Yet when they underwent the proof it chanced to fall out so,
That which might be the abler youth not any one might know:
I can't get all within my page reporting Fame could cram [in hers;
Suffice that either knew enough to puzzle his examiners.

Though questions made sharp thrusts at them to take them
by surprise,
Prepared were they to parry these with pointedest replies;
And tried in logic, rhetoric, and classic prose and rhymes,
Fum-Fum but hesitated twice, and Fee-Fee but three times.

And so the judges for awhile suspended their decision,
Till they could look the question through, and view with
clearer vision; [to stay,
And bade the rival youths meanwhile in an outer room
That their presence in the hall might cause no bias either
way.

And the learned heads were busy, when the two young
men were gone, [their *con;*
In sifting through the business with their *pro* and with
And they laid their learned pigtails all together to make
plain, [the twain.
Whether Fum-Fum or Fee-Fee might be the cleverer of

But when the fact was laid before their consciences so nice,
That thrice Fee-Fee was found at fault, and Fum-Fum
only twice,
In Fum-Fum's favour they prepared their verdict to impart,
When they heard a sudden noise that made their learned
pigtails start.

Now it came to pass, as it well might be,
That when Fum-Fum and when Fee-Fee,
Those rivals alike in love and books,
Met by themselves in an outer apartment,
Each knowing full well what the other at heart meant,
They cast at each other some comical looks:
And with scornings and sneers,
And with gibings and jeers,
And with laughter and leers,
As in fact it appears,
They treated each other, each anxious to show
Himself such a much greater man than his foe.

"Faugh, faugh!" said Fum-Fum in low voice to Fee-Fee,
"Would Fo-Fo give Faw-Faw to a fellow like thee?
By my fay, no, Fee-Fee: fair Faw-Faw is to come
As a fee from Fo-Fo to thy foeman Fum-Fum."

"Nay, few, few," said Fee-Fee, "can believe that Fo-Fo
Would affy fair Faw-Faw to a youth so so-so;
Fye, fye, no, Fum-Fum! fair Faw-Faw is to be
As a fee from Fo-Fo to thy foeman Fee-Fee."

As thus spoke Fee-Fee, oh, how wrath grew Fum-Fum,
His rage made him hot and his scorn made him dumb:
His swift indignation he could not restrain,
For the fumes of the opium were still in his brain.
He could not restrain it, so what did he do,
But he seized poor Fee-Fee with both hands by the queue,
And exerting his arms with more strength than would
rope y$^{em}$
If he hadn't been highly excited by opium,
He made him his victim,
And knocked him and kicked him,
And then swung him round and round over his head,
Till his queue
Broke in two,
And away Fee-Fee flew,
When stopped by the door,
He fell plump on the floor,
Which occasioned the noise which we mentioned before,
And frighted the sages, as also was said.

When the cause of the clamour was known in the hall,
The judges looked grave and the councillors blinked,
And the Emperor put on a frown to appal,
So fearful that none who looked at him but winked:
Unhappy Fee-Fee was found lying along,
No life in his limbs and no breath in his jaws,
d a little way off was the cause of the wrong,
With the tip of the pigtail still left in his paws.

The learned professors were greatly perplexed,
And to clear up the mystery asked, "What will come next?"
The lenses loomed large on the noses of sages,
And the dear little ladies squeaked out of their cages;
The parents and guardians stood twiddling their queues;
The mandarins coughed, and the students turned pale;
And the rag-tag and bob-tail asked what was the news,
When his Majesty ordered the culprit to gaol.

On hearing the fact of how Fum-Fum attacked,
And made such rude siege on
His fellow collegian,
What mode might be left for the judges to act?
It was plain that Fum-Fum, by his headstrong proceeding,
Would have thrown himself out of the field,
In spite of his worth and his erudite reading,
If Fee-Fee should ever be *healed:*
He had lost every claim,
And they struck off his name;
But as Fee-Fee appeared to be *dead*,
Why there seemed every chance
(His ill-luck to enhance)
That they shortly might strike off his head.

And sure 'tis a prospect one's nerves to relax,
To think that one's head should be docked by an axe,
Or a hatchet, or great guillotine;
And if we should live long enough ever to see
Our own head struck off, oh, we hope it may be
By a copper-plate printing machine!
Or we don't mind wood *blocks*,
So they be but of box,
And the headsman an artist of name;
But, an' if we be hung,
We shall hope to be slung
In a neat little maple-wood frame.

Well, the people all stared when the judges declared
That Fum-Fum was struck off the list;

And that Fee-Fee would be at the top of the tree
If he had not so ceased to exist.
They gave up his body, so battered and bloody,
To some of his friends that were there:
And they broke up the court to betake them to sport;
And with kites and sky-rockets, and squibs in their pockets,
With fifes and drums, and with nice sugar-plums,
The sages, we bet, grew a frolicsome set,
And cared very little for care.

But, alas! for the fate of the foolish Fum-Fum,
Had he only been wise, he'd have joined in the hum!
Now thrust in a dungeon so damp and so dim,
The squibs, fifes, and sugar-plums were not for him.
His renown, his Faw-Faw, too, he lost for his freak,
And might perhaps lose his head by the end of the week.
Poor pigtailed Apollo!
What course could he follow,
Not now having opium to smother his dread?
Why, giving a wipe
To the bowl of his pipe,
He cut up his pigtail and smoked it instead.

The days rolled slowly o'er Fum-Fum within his prison cell;
The first day passed—the second came—the third, and all was well; [of lead;
The fourth rolled by on leaden wheels,—the fifth on wheels
The sixth a heavier pace than all,—he wished that he were dead!

He looked around, but looked in vain, for poison, rope, or knife; [to life!"
"Oh, would I'd died ten thousand times, or ere I came
He tried his belt,—"Ah me! ah me! I almost had forgotten,
This would not serve to hang a mouse, it is so old and rotten!"

The seventh day came,—with every day his hope had grown more dim,— [him;
The seventh day came,—of all the days the saddest day to

For lying so long in the damp, he had caught a cold and cough; [chopped off.
Besides,—men came to lead him forth and see his head

They led him forth—those heartless men—they led him forth from gaol, [his tail,—
They lugged him forward by his head,—they could not by
By reason that, as we just now made mention in our lay,
The latter, pressed into his pipe, had all been puffed away.

At first, as he was hauled along, it somewhat eased his dread,
To fancy favour might be shown to one so deeply read;
But when brought in the judgment hall, so stern the judges looked, [was booked.
He knew that books were all in vain,—he knew that he

And when he glanced around the hall,—to prove that hope was vain,
Lo! executioners were there with instruments of pain;
Bamboos, cangues, and harsh thumb-screws, and ankle-screws he saw, [of law.
And hatchets dread to chop the head,—stern ministrants

Those horrid executioners they seized on poor Fum-Fum,
And through the hall of judgment then rose expectation's hum:
They screwed his thumbs as flat as leaves and crunched his ankle bones, [groans.
And all the people clapped their hands to hear his fearful

And then they strapped him, waist and knees, against an upright board, [a sword;
And would have lopped away his head by whirling round
But just as one had raised it up, prepared his head to lop,
Lo! some one called aloud to them, requesting them to stop.

So they just stopped to know
Who had called to them so,
And asked, rather angry, "Who is he? Who is he?"
When who should it be
But the very Fee-Fee
On account of whose death they had all been so busy.

And Fee-Fee stepped forth and went up to the judges,
And told them he bore no ill feelings and grudges
Towards hapless Fum-Fum, who had suffered already
Enough, for the future to make him more steady.
He said (but they scarcely believed him at all)
That he had not been killed out and out by his fall;
But had lain, as it chanced,
For a season entranced,
And when he recovered was not very sore;
So had little to rue,
Save the loss of his queue,
And that very probably time would restore.
"And now," said Fee-Fee, "I have married Faw-Faw,
Who begged me to come
And pray that Fum-Fum
Might not suffer further distress from the law.
So I only just waited a moment to see
How thumb-screws and ankle-screws act,
And I trust you will let my friend Fum-Fum go free,
Now that some of his bones have been cracked."

The judges consulted a little, aside,
And briefly in answer to Fee-Fee replied,
That they pardoned the life of Fum-Fum:
To the great disappointment of all in the court,
Who expected to witness some excellent sport,
And found it was only a hum.

So Fum-Fum was sent home, for he couldn't well walk,
And his story occasioned a great deal of talk:
But as for himself, oh, ne'er
From that very time forth could he hold up his head,
Though it wasn't cut off,—and the life that he led
Was a very great burden to bear.

You'd fancy he couldn't be much at his ease
When he knew fair Faw-Faw was his foeman Fee-Fee's;
So to banish regret,
(Though it got him in debt,)
He laid out in opium all he could get,

And he smoked it away
By night and by day,
Not minding at all what his parents might say.
And his face grew green,
And he got very lean,
And his eyes were two terrible things to be seen;
And his wasted lips round his teeth were spread,
With the horrible grin of a live death's head.
And he moped and he pined as his health declined,
Until, from an equal marasmus of mind,
In an idiot fit, one day,
(Though it's likely the fact may look strange in our type,)
He sat himself down on the bowl of his pipe,
And by a mistake,
Which he happened to make,—
Or urged thereunto by the woes he endured,
And because to be *smoked* is the way to be *cured*,—
Smoked his very own self away.

"Go, my song," says Pi-Ping, in concluding this tale,
"O'er the waters of fame with thine oar and thy sail;
And tell ages and ages and ages to come,
Of Faw-Faw, and Fee-Fee, and Fo-Fo, and Fum-Fum."

# THE FEAST OF LANTERNS.*

"Heigh-ho!
Amida-Fo—
What shall I do?
Where shall I go?
With my Hey-ho, hey nonny no."—No-Wun.

Is there any one, we mean, who has not heard of that great annual festival of China, yclept the Feast of Lanterns? It occurs at the commencement of the year: not indeed in your January; it is not a snug fireside solemnity like our Christmas, but an out-of-door jubilee. It would not, therefore, be suited to a Peking mid-winter, when the snow, as is frequently the case in the "Region of eternal Spring," has well nigh buried the houses. It is celebrated at the full of the moon, about the commencement of the Chinese year, but towards the end of our February. At that time, in the Far East, the spring has made some progress; the peach-trees are in blossom, and little birds, in the southern provinces, pour out their sweet "Te-te," in measures now weak and now strong, from the branches of the tea-trees. The Feast of Lanterns takes place at the full of the moon; but the new-year's holidays commence about a fortnight earlier, and continue for three weeks. These holidays are of the merriest possible description; the whole population of the most populous of lands dispensing for the time with all toil, and banishing all care; and thinking of nothing but eating and drinking, and acting courteously, and making merry.

Now in all lands, at all festivals, eating and drinking are well understood, and equally well practised by most that have the means. And the people of Continental Europe make merry

* The Feast of Lanterns is a comical story, by Jing-Go. It would be superfluous surely to say anything of a writer whose name must be so familiar to all our readers.

at the Carnival, and the time when ourselves did so at Christmas, is within the recollection even of young persons; but festivals of no other people have at any time been made so resplendent by the polish of courtesy as those of the Chinese. It has been calculated that during the three weeks of their new-year's jubilee upwards of four millions of millions of bows, besides other forms of salutation, are annually made by this polite race. Their presents to each other on the same occasion are likewise very numerous, about one, it is supposed, to every ten thousand bows.

There is not at any time a lack of ceremony and external politeness among the Chinese; but at this particular season a certain cordiality prevails among them; and makes them, for a while, forego some of their colder and less social forms and customs. All swarm into the streets, with little to do but to greet and to be greeted; and even the ladies enjoy for a brief period a certain degree of liberty, which is not allowed them during the remainder of the year: they mask themselves and go forth into the streets with their husbands and parents and witness the exhibitions of fireworks, kite-flying, boat-racing, or whatever happens to offer in the streets or on the canals, for the amusements of the idle multitudes. No one keeps within doors. The very servants are allowed to wander forth; and houses are frequently left quite vacant; the doors, of course, at such times being locked to prevent the entrance of any who might otherwise, by mistake, find their way into apartmnts not their own.

Shops are shut up: manufactories are deserted: there is no business in the public courts and offices. Grave magistrates trundle hoops in the streets; philosophers, like so many Franklins, fly kites. Myriads of paper boats are set afloat upon the rivers; squibs and crackers at night make the whole air luminous, and the smell of the sulphur may be perceived afar off at sea.

Such are the rejoicings at the new year. But the grand feast of all the festival is on the night of the full moon; and this is called, as we have said, the Feast of Lanterns. It takes its name from an exhibition then made of paper or silken lanterns of all varieties of form and colour, with one of which every individual is careful to be provided.

The day of the Feast of Lanterns had arrived, and all the population of Peking were awaiting with anxiety the display that was to take place in the evening. The weather was delightfully fine, and anticipation was standing, Taglioni-wise, upon the very tip of her great toe; an awkward position for a less buoyant lady to have preserved through so many hours. Multitudes of the citizens were prepared with new lamps, and multitudes more were furbishing up old, all hoping that their individual lights would attract individual attention. Many a little urchin had formed for himself a lantern out of scraps of paper that had lain about the streets, and in the innocence of his heart believed that his little fistful of darkness visible would excite the same admiration in all others that it raised in himself. Lanterns were the universal theme of conversation; and upon that night you might be sure no livers in Peking would be without their lights.

The family of the worthy Hou-Nou participated with the other citizens in anxiety upon the all-important matter. The family of the worthy Hou-Nou consisted, besides himself, of his wife, Nae-Nae, his daughter, Hey-ho, and two or three domestics. Hou-Nou was a person of some consideration in the "business part" of the city: he was a dealer in candles and oil, and, therefore, the Feast of Lanterns, it may be supposed, occasioned in him even more than the ordinary interest. It was a gratification to him to walk forth in the evenings at seasons like the present, and imagine that any lantern whose consumptive flickerings he detected at a distance, might possibly be indebted for its little dole of vitality to the oil pots at No. 1, in the "Alley of Salted Sturgeon." Number 1, in the Alley of Salted Sturgeon, was the house in which Hou-Nou resided, as had done many generations of his progenitors; and its shelves and corners were abundantly stocked with venerable oil jars, for he carried on a thriving retail trade; yet, perhaps, like many a worthy alderman, Hou-Nou gave himself credit for contributing to the enlightenment of his fellow-citizens, more than was in reality the case. His wife, Nae-Nae, fully appreciated the great public value of her husband and his oil; and if she sometimes shook him by the nose, it was from no want of proper respect, but merely from a little infirmity of temper. The daughter of this

felicitous twain was a damsel of sixteen, exceedingly comely, but too simple to have grown, at so tender an age, at all aware of the fact. Let another year or two roll over her,—let the shepherds of Peking write madrigals to her trotters, and throw up their sheep's eyes at her window, and no doubt a change would come over the spirit of her dreams. But as yet, when she heard of fireworks and lanterns, she thought not of her eyes; she had little idea how well these were calculated to attract the eyes of others; and if she had possessed ten thousand pair she would have considered one pyrotechnic volley worth them all.

The day had arrived: the white slave whose business it was to see that all preparations were duly made for the approach of the expected Ethiop queen,—proud lady, with thousands of "rich jewels" in her ear, and carcanets of stars about her brows,—and Hou-Nou, one of the artisans employed upon the decorations of the palace, was busily engaged in cleaning up old lanterns, supplying fresh paper where needed, and oiling it to make it more transparent, when a knock was given to the gong at the door, and that being answered, a servant delivered a letter. This was taken to Hou-Nou, who put down the lantern he had at the moment in his hand, wiped his oily fingers, and perused the epistle.

Hou-Nou was, as we have said, a very worthy little gentleman; but he was of hot temper, as little gentleman are very apt to be. "A little pot is soon hot," says Grumio, and Hou-Nou was a little pot. Imagine not, however, that Hou-Nou was a round little man; on the contrary, he was what the Chinese call "short weight," both short and thin; and he rejoiced in a face and forehead that might have been mistaken for a monkey's. Well, as Hou-Nou read the letter his indignation arose, and was expressed in numberless twitchings of his by no means prepossessing physiognomy: he scratched his head and rubbed his chin, and casting a look with his two large, monkey eyes, upon the domestic from whom he had received the document, he demanded who had left it at the door. Being informed that it had been brought by a gentleman's servant, he desired that the gentleman's servant might come into the

apartment; but his own attendant on going to the hall, discovered that the bearer of the letter had disappeared.

"Who the black dragon can have sent me this?" said Hou-Nou to himself, as he turned about the epistle in his hands, and examined it carefully sideways and upside down. The motto upon the seal did not assist him at all in unfolding the mystery. "Who the black dragon can this be from?" was the motto.

The object of the communication which was anonymous, was to warn Hou-Nou to keep a strict watch upon his beautiful daughter Hey-ho, during the approaching evening of the Feast of Lanterns; for it proceeded to state, that that young lady had made an engagement with a young gentleman, a certain Fun, to withdraw herself from the fostering care of her parents, and throw herself upon his protection; and that the evening of the Feast of Lanterns was the time agreed upon between them for carrying this purpose into effect. There is no season of the Chinese year so propitious for marriage as the holiday with which it commences; and the nearer the full of the moon, the more fortunate the occasion is considered. We are inclined to believe that even in the West a majority of the marriages are agreed upon at the full of the moon. This was, doubtless, one reason which might have had some weight in inducing the young people to select that particular time; but another, which would be likely to possess still greater ponderosity, was, that the temporary liberty then usually accorded to young ladies would very considerably facilitate the execution of such a project.

Hey-ho was to have gone forth with her parents, in the evening, to have witnessed the exhibition of lamps and fireworks; and (as the letter informed Hou-Nou) would take advantage of a moment when all eyes and minds were engaged with some fresh display of pyrotechnical ingenuity, to steal off with the insidious Fun. Little wonder then, that the young lady's respectable father was surprised, and wrathful at the receipt of such intelligence; but he was naturally curious to discover who was his informant, and how his unknown correspondent became possessed of such a secret. He was not able to unravel this mystery; and he determined, before he resolved on any

decisive step, to question his daughter, without making here aware of his suspicions. He sent, therefore, for Hey-ho.

"You wish, Hey-ho," said he, when his daughter appeared before him, "you wish to accompany your parents this evening, to see the fireworks and lanterns?"

"If my highly-honoured father will permit," replied Hey-ho, making a very profound bow.

"And why do you so much desire to attend the festival? what very particular object have you in view?"

"None very particular," she said, with another most lowly bend; "I wish, with my parent's permission, to go, for the sake of fun."

"Oh! for the sake of Fun. You are fond of Fun then, are you? But I do not intend that you shall have anything to do with Fun; I shall lock you up this evening when we go forth."

"I trust," said Hey-ho, with a surprised and imploring look, and making use of the figurative mode of speech, so much employed in the ordinary discourse of the Chinese, "I trust a potent and magnanimous cat will not treat its poor mouse so harshly." And she accompanied her words with a bow, more expressive of deep filial reverence than either of those by which it had been preceded.

"I shall do as I say," continued Hou-Nou; "and a bamboo grows in the garden. Audacious girl! to think of Fun without permission of your father."

"Alas!" cried Hey-ho, "I thought, as a thing of course, that my lofty tower of a father would wish me to have fun. I should have been careful else how I entertained the idea."

It was all in vain that poor little Hey-ho entreated. Her father was inexorable, as he considered that she had owned her fault, and established the truth of the statements in the epistle by confessing her predilection for Fun. Her mother also took part against her, and declared her to be the most profligate little creature for entertaining this unaccountable fondness for Fun: she fully coincided with her husband in the propriety of locking her up, and not allowing her to witness the amusements of the evening. Poor little Hey-ho vainly ventured some very respectful remonstances, accompanying the same

with most filial revererences; but finding that these were quite without effect, she betook herself with a heavy heart, to solitude and tears.

Well, the evening came: the lanterns were ready; and Hou-Nou and his wife went forth. They permitted their domestics to accompany them, but left the unhappy Hey-ho to meditation and misery. Unfortunate little Hey-ho! disconsolate little Hey-ho! She had been haunted for months past, awake and asleep, with visions of the Feast of Lanterns—*the* holiday of the year. The rest of the twelve moons had passed away in the dullest monotony, and gave her a keen appetite for a little taste of amusement. She had long been reckoning with confidence upon this; she had looked to the Feast of Lanterns as an occasion of perfect felicity. She had behaved with the most dutiful attention to her parents; they had hitherto appeared perfectly willing that she should accompany them on that evening; she had no idea that there could be any other object in attending such a festival except enjoyment, or, as she called it, fun; she had congratulated herself in the morning that the day was so fine; and she had anticipated abundance of fun in the evening. Oh, must not then the disappointment of Hey-ho have been exceeeingly bitter, as the goodly fabric which hope had reared for her of all the prettiest cards in the pack, was thus blown down by the breath of an unkind father?

With vain entreaties she followed her parents to the street door: they went out, closed it, and removed the key, leaving her only one dull lantern to console her for the loss of the illumination.

She lent against the cruel portal and sobbed as though her little heart would have split into a thousand flinders. "Well, this is no fun at all," she cried; "there 's no fun for me."

"That 's as *you* please," observed a little voice somewhere, but Hey-ho could not for a while discover from whence the little voice proceeded. She was startled and terrified, and glanced round without perceiving any one. At last her eyes fell upon a large jar, which stood in one corner of the hall; and her astonishment was great at observing a small, round head appearing above the neck of this earthen vessel, the lid of which was raised, and served as a cap to the small round head.

Hey-ho's heart beat fast when she noticed this apparition, and she almost sank upon the ground with fright; but she kept her eyes upon the small round head, and the very good-humoured and waggish expression of the face a little reassured her.

"Don't be frightened, most beautiful Hey-ho," said the good-natured little apparition.

"I wouldn't if I could help it," stammered Hey-ho; "but who are you?"

"Why," replied the head, "I am just what you didn't expect to meet with," and it laughed.

"He laughs like fun," said Hey-ho to herself.

"I am Fun," continued the apparition; "and very much at your service."

"Who?" asked Hey-ho.

"Fun," said he; "Fun, Fun, Fun,—nobody else but Fun;" and he looked excessively funny.

"And why came you hither?" demanded Hey-ho, who began to gain courage from the pleasing manners of Fun, and to enjoy the joke of thus unexpectedly meeting with a companion.

"I came hither to see the beautiful Hey-ho," replied he; "and, if it were in my power, somewhat to console her. If she will, Fun shall be hers for ever and a day.

"But *how* came you hither?" she asked, her fear somewhat returning as that question occurred to her: surely, she thought, by some supernatural means.

"Why," responded Fun, "I came here,—I got in,—I appeared,—that is to say,—I have a certain talisman—"

And here Fun hatched up a long story of as many *lies** as there are between Peking and Canton. There is no occasion that we should repeat all he said, or attempt to impose upon your credulity, as he did upon Hey-ho's. It was no talisman that assisted him into the jar; we will explain to you the whole truth of the matter.

Hey-ho being, as hath been said, a damsel extremely fair and comely, and Fun having once seen her by accident, he had entertained from that time a strong and very natural desire to have her to wife. How to obtain her, however, was rather a difficult question. He could find nothing in the Book of Rites that would justify his forcing himself upon the acquaintance of her father; and, as a Chinese proverb observes, "If you cannot get over the outer wall, you will not get over the inner." But Fun consoled himself with another Chinese saying: "He that would steal fruit does not borrow the gardener's ladder;" and he set his brains at work to devise some plan whereby he might possess himself of Hey-ho, without consulting her father.

When the Feast of Lanterns drew near, it occurred to Fun that that might be a convenient as well as propitious time for effecting his object; and at first he pondered on the practicability of enticing away Hey-ho, when with her parents, she ould attend the exhibitions of the evening. But a more ppy idea afterwards entered his mind; and he immediately

* See note, p. 22.

engaged in operations for the execution of this project. He wrote the letter which we have already described Hou-Nou as receiving; and arraying himself as a servant, delivered it at the old gentleman's door. Whilst the domestic into whose hands he had given it was absent, he looked round for a snug place in which he might hide; and observing the large jar, and considering that it was not likely he should be detected in that, with some little difficulty he squeezed himself in and shut down the lid. We need not speak of the mortal fright he was in until he was "safely stowed," lest any one should appear in the hall; but things happened luckily, and his concealment was complete.

From within his jar, the cover of which he raised a little occasionally, as well to listen to what was going forward as to obtain air, he overheard much of what passed between Hou-Nou and Hey-ho, in the neighbouring apartment. He was delighted at finding that everything occurred according to his anticipations; and waited, therefore, with great patience and fortitude, in a hiding-place which would not have been agreeable, certainly, for a protracted residence.

Perhaps it may occasion surprise that in writing to Hou-Nou, Fun should have given his own name; that he should have directed suspicion to himself, when it would have been so easy to have found for it a different channel. But Fun was fond of frolic, and the most impudent dog in all the Central Land. He would have considered it no sport to have put old Hou-Nou on a wrong scent altogether. His object was to set him first upon a right one, and afterwards baffle him by well-managed doublings and windings; and he would not probably have troubled himself to get married at all, had it not been for the compound extract of sport he expected from hunting and from being hunted.

"And how is it, Thousand Pieces of Gold," said Fun, "that you are not abroad this night, when all other houses are deserted?—that you are not abroad, outshining the lanterns and the moon?"

"My parents," responded Hey-ho,—and at the recollection she burst again into tears—"my parents would not allow me to go forth. My father locked me up here, and told me there grew a bamboo in the garden; and all for no better reason than because I was fond of fun."

"Cruel parents! cruel father!" exclaimed the young audacious; "if I were the Thousand Pieces of Gold, I would exert me somehow to spite them."

"And what could poor little I do?" asked Hey-ho. "Oh, poor little luckless I!"

"I could talk more freely," said the young gentleman, "If I were out of this jar. But here I am wedged in,—I'm in a regular *case!* *Jam* in the jar, by Jing-Go!" and Fun struggled to get out.

He struggled to get out, but in vain. We know not how it was—he had got cramped, we suppose, by his position; but, like the weasel in the fable, he could not obtain egress at the hole by which he had entered. Thus unfortunately situated, he appealed to young Hey-ho for assistance; and this after some hesitation, she accorded. By dint then of much struggling upon his part, and of an energetic handling of his pigtail on hers, after a time he got free to the waist: but there occurred another hitch, which all their endeavours failed to overcome. Some would have been immensely annoyed; but Fun was immensely amused. At last, by stamping violently he broke out the bottom of the jar, and thrusting his legs through regained in part his locomotive power.

It will not be necessary to detail the arguments by which he overcame the scruples of Hey-ho, and induced her assent to an elopement with him. She was anxious to spite her papa, and no less so to see the fireworks; she was pleased with the manners of Fun, and was fond of a good joke. All these considerations, aided by the young man's eloquence, might well prevail on a youthful and inexperienced girl. So Hey-ho agreed to fly with Fun; and,—by way of carrying the jest up to its climax,—to get married.

In carrying into execution this rash resolve, it was necessary, of course, to guard against her being recognized by any in the streets. She disguised herself, therefore, as well as she was able, and covered her face with a thick veil.

Another difficulty now presented itself. They were locked in!—how were they to escape?

The house was of two stories; and the upper windows were not secured. They went up stairs; the young lady assisting the

youth, whose jar would otherwise have proved a sad impediment to his proceeding.

But for the inconvenient armour of porcelain in which he was arrayed, Fun could easily have leaped down from the casement; for he was active and brave. As it was, however, he was again dependent upon the lady's assistance; and exerting all her strength, more than you would have imagined could be in her slender wrists, she lowered him down by his pigtail. When she let go, he had yet a few cubits to fall, and this perhaps was a fortunate circumstance, as the porcelain jar was thereby shat-

tered, and he walked as freely as ever. Fun, however, was a little disappointed, as he had enjoyed the idea of stalking about in such a quaint disguise.

Fun being safely on the ground, Hey-ho, with the courage befitting a heroine, leaped into his arms. They were quite unobserved; for that part of the city was wholly deserted, the people having gone to witness a very grand display of fireworks and lanterns in a neighbouring square.

Towards that square Fun immediately conducted his prize, and a very few turnings among some narrow streets and passages brought them thereunto. They met with none to question them on the way; for even the watch had taken holiday, deeming it quite unnecessary to keep guard in empty streets. Hey-ho, no doubt, was a little frightened, as soon as she had taken her rash leap from the window, at thinking of what she had done; and very probably wished herself again within the house: but as the door was locked, it was impossible to get back; and Fun used every argument to convince her of the propriety of their proceeding, and to keep up her spirits. It was certainly a novel situation for one who before had scarcely ever even exchanged words with any gentleman, unless related to herself; but the state of excitement in which she had been all day, first from delight, and then from disappointment and anger, had led her on to do that which in other circumstances she would have looked upon as most heinous. But what had the greatest effect in restoring the courage and spirits of Hey-ho, was the lively scene that unfolded itself before her, as with her conductor she approached the square.

This was bounded on three sides by houses; but, on the side opposite to the one where they had entered, was terminated by the river, in that place broad, though shallow. The streets through which they had come lay somewhat higher than the square itself, and a flight of steps led down thereinto; so that, before they descended, they had a good view of the large open area, and also of the water and houses beyond. Immediately before them was a dense mass of people, every individual flourishing a lantern; festoons of lanterns were suspended above them upon poles, and likewise between the houses; the stream was overspread with boats of all sorts and sizes, the decks, the

masts, and, in fact, every part covered with lamps and lanterns; and numberless pagodas and other high buildings on the further side of the river, some near, and others at a great distance, were similarly adorned with lights innumerable. From a raised platform in the middle of the square, as well as from many remoter points, a girandola of rockets was frequently thrown up; and in the intervals a display was made of other fireworks of most ingenious invention. Luminous globes rose high in the air, and burst with showers of coloured light, from among which soared large birds, and winged horses and dragons, blue, yellow, green and crimson; and these seemed to chase each other, and again to spit forth fire in new forms. Now and then down the river would float a huge and stately serpent, its body drawn up in many graceful bends—a serpent, perhaps, of emerald light, with eyes of intense red,—and from its mouth would drop continual balls of fire, which, falling on the river assumed the form of little luminous boats, and spread far and wide upon the surface. From myriads of people arose constantly shouts of applause and laughter; and when these for a moment were still, the more melodious tones of musical glasses and other instruments seemed to supply a sort of magical harmony, in keeping with the wonderful sights.

Hey-ho was bewildered and delighted. She watched for a time the more striking and resplendent fireworks, and was dazzled and confused by the myriads of starry lights that studded the air all around, that sprinkled the sky, and were reflected from the water. After a little she began to examine the lanterns and other luminous devices in detail; they were worth examination, for their ingenuity was great, and their variety surprising. Every one had striven to outdo his neighbour in providing himself with a lantern, remarkable for its size, or for its colour, or its form, or for the designs wherewith it was embellished. There were some of all sizes, from an orange to a watch-box; of all shapes, round, square, polygonal, vase-like, like flowers, like trees, like animals, like men; of all colours, with inscriptions and paintings of all shades of colour, and ornamented with devices of the variety of which could be given but a faint idea: the current of air caused by the flame was used to set in motion small figures of men, birds, and butterflies, junks,

windmills, fish, and other things and creatures; and warriors fought, and horses leaped, and mandarins bowed, and monkeys swung upon cords.

"He-he!" said Hey-ho, "see there! that tumbler standing on his head—look! look how he turns about!—and there is a mandarin with a blue body and a yellow face. Ski! hi! what a beautiful firework!—as like a peacock as two betel nuts! But, ha! he! hey! ho! hee! what is this little fellow doing? just look! see! note! observe! mark!—why he's dancing Djim-Kro!"

(Djim-Kro was a famous tumbler who lived in the days of Yu.)

"Do but behold that absurd little man," said Fun, pointing in another direction, "how he waddles along, with a lantern twice as large as himself. And that ugly old woman by his side;—hers looks, for all the Celestial Land, like a gentleman's petticoat."

(A gentleman's petticoat in the Celestial Land corresponds to his —— trousers in this.)

Hey-ho looked at the persons to whom he pointed, and immediately uttered a scream. The cause of her alarm may be easily divined. The twain were no other than her dreaded papa and mamma. She well nigh fainted; but was supported by Fun, who reminded her that her disguise was such, as, if she would but command her fears, must render detection impossible.

Of course, Fun immediately conducted the runaway young lady to a part of the square remote from that in which they had discovered Hou-Nou. No "of course" in the case. Fun did no such thing: he obtained from Hey-ho a promise that she would keep up her courage, and he immediately walked with her up to the old gentleman, her highly respectable papa.

Hou-Nou was strutting with the importance of a person who knew that he was burning his own oil; he had fastened a long bamboo to his back by means of a cord round his waist; and to the end of this, which rose two or three yards above his head, was suspended his enormous lantern; his wife carried hers in the same manner, as did thousands of other persons.

Fun approached, and having made six or eight very polite bows, in returning which the old gentleman nearly shook his

lantern off the end of the bamboo, our audacious young friend demanded, with the politest form of circumlocution, whether his "venerable uncle,"* a Chinese term of respect quite unconnected with the "Three Balls," did not rejoice in the "honourable appellation" of Hou-Nou.

"Hou-Nou," replied Hou-Nou with the affected humility so so common among the politest of nations, "Hou-Nou is your servant's very ignoble name."

"Methinks," said Fun, "your paltry rat has the honour of addressing that very illustrious Hou-Nou, who lives in the conspicuous corner house of the highly magnificent lane, called the Alley of Salted Sturgeon?"

"Your servitor," answered Hou-Nou, "dwells in the place you mention. May he ask your most honourable title?"

"The continually-to-be-sneezed-at name of your ever-ought-to-be-beaten dog," said Fun, "is Fan-Si. Your dog just now slunk along by your most noble dwelling, and had the little deserved honour of beholding your pile-of-volumes son, and your string-of-rubies daughter, at the window. Your dog wondered greatly that they came not hither to make the lamps burn more brightly."

"Of a truth," responded Hou-Nou, "had more of my oil been used, the illumination would have been more luminous. But dog of a son have I none, though I have a bambooable cat of a daughter."

"It was then perhaps your full-of-desert daughter's most profoundly-to-be-reverenced husband?"

"There was no one," replied Hou-Nou, "there was no man whatever in my house: my daughter is not married. Surely your exemplary eyes must have made some mistake." But Hou-Nou was startled somewhat.

"Indeed!" cried Fun: "toad as I am, I am quite certain that I beheld with my one-bigger-than-the-other eyes, two persons, a gentleman and a lady, at the window of your dwelling."

"Though I will by no means deny it," answered Hou-Nou (he would not be rude to the stranger, and therefore responded in such a form), "yet I know not how it may be possible for

* See note, *B*.

I have brought with me the key of the house. I pray you tell me," he continued, "who might this have been?"

"Nay," said Fun, "I know not; I fear I have been impertinent to speak so much."

"No," said the old man, "I thank you greatly. My ought-to-be-squeezed-in-a-vice daughter—But imagine for me, who *could* this person have been?"

"Very reverentially speaking, is there not any whom she loves?"

"And if there should be, how could he get through the key-hole?"

"Had not the door been open in the day?"

"But if he had come in then, where should he have concealed himself?"

"Oh, some will hide themselves in very small corners. I know a youth, a certain Fun, who could hide himself in a good-sized porcelain pot."

"Fun? Fun?—Why that's the very muddy pool of a youth. I had a letter in the morning which informed me so much."

"A letter?—from whom?"—When conversation grows very serious, forms and compliments are a good deal dispensed with, even in China.

"'Who the black dragon can this be from?' that was the motto. I don't know from whom it came?"

"Why that," said Fun, "is the very motto of Fun's own seal. I am well acquainted with Fun; he and I are inseparable: and from what I know of him, I would wager my brain to a pint of oil, that he brought you the letter himself, and then hid in some corner or jar."

"Oh, it is too true,—it is too true;" cried Hou-Nou. "Come with me, Nae-Nae. I will boil my daughter in oil."

"Nay, nay," said Nae-Nae, believing him to be serious,—"Boil only her hands therein."

"Oh, wicked snake of a daughter!" cried Hou-Nou, slapping his hands together with great violence. Bang went in the sides of his lantern, and he was fain to put out the light.

"Oh, little wolf of a daughter!" echoed Nae-Nae: and a similar action was attended by a similar result.

Hou-Nou and his wife hurried back to their domicile, and

Fun, with their daughter, followed. When they reached it they observed that a window was open above; but they saw no person, and no light.

"Alas! alas!" cried the parents, "our wicked daughter has fled. She has gone away with accursed Fun. We shall see her no more."

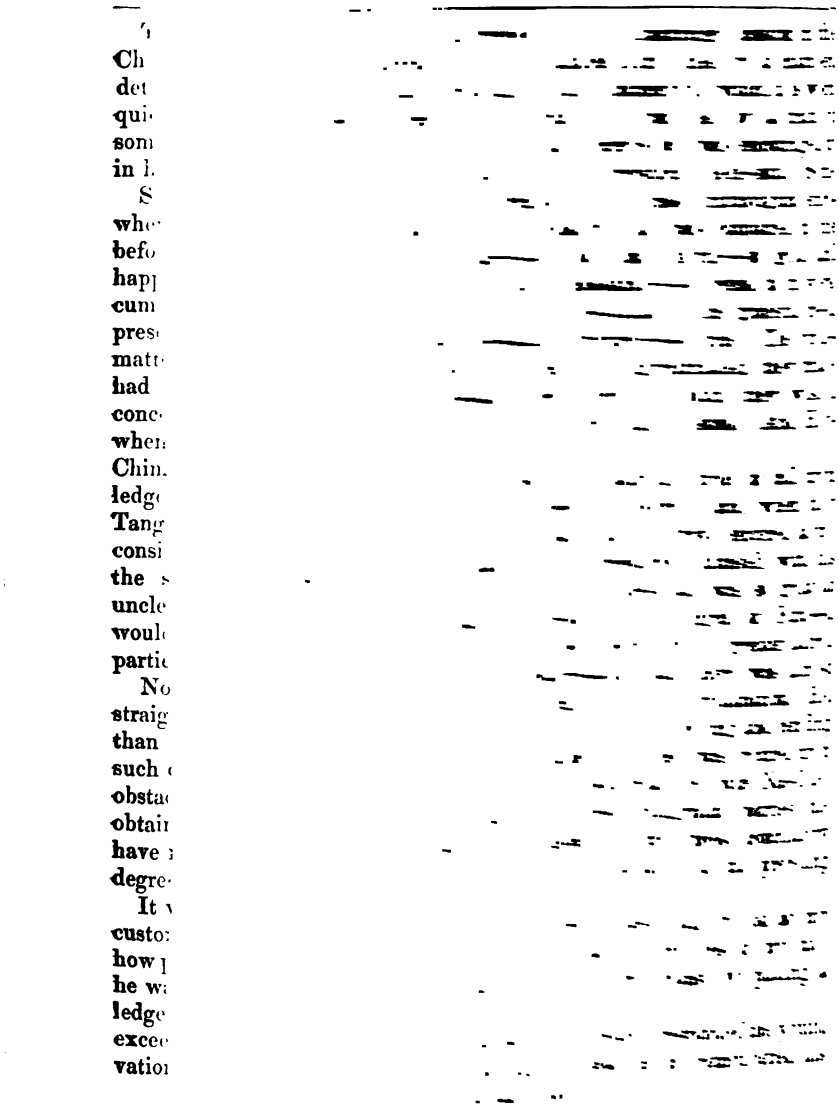
Hou-Nou opened the door, and Nae-Nae entered. Hou-Nou had not withdrawn the key, when Fun drew the portal suddenly together and locked it on the outside; in doing so he dexterously contrived to lift up at the same moment the old gentleman's queue, which was caught in the door as it shut. Hou-Nou was fast by his pigtail. His wife sought in vain for the means of striking a light; the flints and steel were not in their places, and she broke her shins in the search. You may imagine the state of wrath and indignation in which Hou-Nou and his wife passed the night.

"Ho," said Fun ere he left the door, "I am the particular friend of Fun,—he begged me to serve him this good turn, and the wine I drank with him hath made me merry."

"Fun," screamed Hou-Nou, "shall be pounded in a mortar for this, and the friend of Fun shall be tied in a sack of snakes."

"Nay," answered Nae-Nae, "they shall laugh the wrong sides of their noses. But, you foolish old blockhead," said she, "to be duped after this fashion;" and she felt in the dark for Hou-Nou's ear, which she twisted severely when she found it.

From the time the young gentleman first accosted the old one, poor Hey-ho, who was in a mortal fright, kept as much out of view as possible. Several times she was on the point of confessing her fault and throwing herself upon the mercy of her father; but she could not gain courage to do so; and when the door was closed, Fun hurried her away as fast as possible. He promised to effect a reconciliation with her parents, if she would become his wife; and having placed her in a sedan, he took her to his house, where many of his friends, whom he had invited to attend his wedding on the propitious evening of the Feast of Lanterns, had been for some expecting them. At the door they were met by some matrons, his relatives, who assisted Hey-ho out of her sedan, and lifted her over the pan of charcoal



"Wherefore did thy swine-feeding hand turn the key in it last night?" roared Hou-Nou.

"Of a truth your scrag-end-of-less-than-nothing was beside himself with wine," humbly ejaculated Fun; "but now, being of clearer sense, the ball of evil which he threw strikes back upon his own nose; and that he may find a salve for the soreness it occasions, he has brought hither a string of pearls, which he solicits your generous condescension to accept."

"Be they real pearls?" said Hou-Nou, a little mollified, as he stretched out his hand to receive them.

"Nay, nay," interrupted Nae-Nae, "I fear me they be not real."

"They be real pearls," said Hou-Nou. "I forgive you your floutings for this: but how about the loss of my tail?"

"Your most reverence-commanding tail will grow again," replied Fun; and meanwhile I have other pearls, of which, with humility, I will entreat your greatly-to-be-knelt-for acceptance."

"It is enough," said the old man. "Let this bond of pearls bind us to friendship."

"And may it never be worn out," said Fun.

"Or if it should," answered Hou-Nou, "may it be renewed."

Having so far succeeded, Fun intimated to the old gentleman that he had another favour to request; but begged, before he mentioned it, to be allowed to introduce a lady who was waiting for him below in her sedan, and who he was afraid would feel fatigued. Hou-Nou bowed to this with all possible Chinese politeness, and was solicitous to know who the more bright-than-ten-thousand-stars lady might be.

"To tell you the truth," answered Fun, "this lady is a bunch of lilies whom I but yesterday took to wife. She is the daughter of a highly respectable old gentleman, for whom I entertain a very cordial esteem."

He conducted the lady into the room. She was still closely veiled. Fourteen minutes elapsed in the usual bows and compliments. Fun then announced the further favour he had to request;—it was a pardon to his friend Fun, and to Fun's wife, Hou-Nou's daughter.

"Alas!" cried Hou-Nou, "my poor little daughter! I shall never see her more."

"If you will graciously accord pardon to both," said Fun, "I will promise you shall see her this day."

"Wicked Fun," said the father, "shall be strangled, beheaded, poisoned, flayed, and cut in nine millions of pieces."

"If your worshipful stomach," responded the youth,—Chinese philoshphers hold that the stomach is the seat of reason,*—"if your worshipful stomach be so ill-minded towards them, I fear you will never find either Fun or your daughter. If you should, Fun, you may be sure, will bribe the mandarins higher for his safety than you will do to get him punished."

"Alas!" exclaimed Hou-Nou, "if I may get back my dear daughter, whom, however, I will well bamboo, I will forgive wicked Fun."

"You must freely pardon your daughter also, or you will see her no more," responded the youth.

"I will do all things so she shall not be lost to me wholly," said the old man.

"But your virtuous and venerable hand will furnish me with a promise in writing?" asked Fun.

"Anything—anything at all!" replied Hou-Nou.

So down they sat and committed the promise to paper. It received the old gentleman's signature. Fun folded it and put it in his vest.

"Most-reverentially-to-be-bowed-before, Sir, I am Fun," said Fun.

And Fun bowed lowly and twiddled his queue.

"Most-on-my-knees-to-be-honoured, and more-than-my-life-to-be-loved parents, I am Hey-ho," said Hey-ho.

And, bending reverentially, Hey-ho cast back her veil.

The old man raised his staff.—The young one drew out the bond.—The youthful pair fell on their knees, and the aged pair embraced them both.

So join with us now, such has have honest hearts, and let us drink long life to Fun and all his family.

* *Chinese Miscellany.*

# LETTER FROM SAM-SING TO WEEP-WEEP.

From the artist Sam-Sing to his beloved Weep-Weep, in her Duck-barge on the remembered stream.

Is Sam-Sing remembered yet in the duck-barge of the yellow-tailed dragon on his native river Kum-Sloa-Song? Do the coffee eyes of Weep-Weep drop sea-water into the fresh stream when she thinks how he has sailed beyond the extreme bounds of infinite space, to the nest of the scrambling dragons, and the haunts of the savage people who burn no gilt paper to josses, and shave not the hair of their heads? And does she think sometimes to shake the dust off the best petticoat of Sam-Sing, which he left wrapped up in the matting in the hole over the roosting-box of the scarlet-tailed drake so that it may be in good order if he should be called upon to appear before the blue and red buttons on his return to give an account of the wonders he has seen and the dangers he has gone through, which truly, and not to boast, nor to put more teeth to the dragon than the gums will fairly allow, have been such as never waking-man encountered, nor thought of the sleeper imagined, which a thousand thousand reeds would not suffice to write, nor the tongues of two women to tell? But let Sam-Sing pass over these as too difficult to be put into a small fold of paper; and forbear to speak of the storms that lifted the Keying from the sea and bore her through the air as a mandarian plays with his paper kite; or turned her over and over so that the cook had much ado, standing on his head, to save the rice by holding the lid on the boiler; and which made the masts bend like a thief when he wears the cauque, or a commissioner when he bows to the emperor. Let me not speak of the big fish that blows waterspouts up from their noses; nor of the god of the sea that came on board with an iron beard, and made us drink of the devil's samshoo; let me not mention the enormous sea-snakes that are kept near these barbarian shores, whose fiery and the soft purring cat of his bosom would sit by his side, not

eye in the night warns the sailor to keep off at sea; and let me not name it, that I have seen them with red eyes and blue, and with eyes that twist round in their head, and are dark and bright by turns.

Bnt let me tell you what will, indeed, astonish you, that the barbarians of this outside land, though they have a river, know not duckbarges; and if we could bring ours hither with its cargo of a thousand on board, doubtless it would sell for gold enough to pave the streets of Canton. Ducks they have truly, but in fives and sixes; and they know not how to educate them to pick a discreet living. Their river, instead of ducks, is full of scrambling dragons, which ply their manyclawed paddles day and night, and belching fire and smoke, make fearful commotion in the water. Through and among each other they dart, as quick and as many as fireflies, or as the black spirits of the fiery land. And the tall-masted junks, with towers of cloth rising over each other like the stories of a pagoda, are thick as bamboo-branches in the district of Tchong-tscheon. Dreadful is it to see the haste of this barbarian land. All things are racing with all. All people want to get all things done. Thus it is that, instead of duck-barges, they have scrambling dragons. Our rivers sleep and reflect the heavens. Here the river never sleeps, but writhes ever under the claws of the smoke-breathing monsters, and the wheels which one raises by the lashing of its fins give way to the wheels from the fast-stricken fins of another. This people will ride through to the end of time before the Central Land is a quarter on its course. They hurry as though a bad spirit were behind, and all are upon the heels of all. Pleasant was it to Sam-Sing in the days of old to sit on the roof of his barge, when the sinking sun was putting the finest gold-leaf on the waters, and to watch the ducks sailing as slowly as straws upon a slow stream, and looking with placid eyes upon the hour, as though the present were a friend of whose company they had no wish to be rid.

Pleasant was it to Sam-Sing to see the rice and maize-coloured cat that made such a tender guardian to the young ducklings, coil herself up like a rope, that has no more work for today, and enjoy herself upon the simple sweet breath of the evening, as though the world were her opium-pipe. And pleasant was it to Sam-Sing, above all things, when his own chosen duck

speaking or only in whispers, but feeling with him that for awhile their boat of life had found anchorage in a pleasant bay, that the storms were asleep, that the sky was a blue umbrella, mottled and fringed with gold; that the sun to west, and the moon in the east, were lanterns that need not hide their heads at an Emperor's *fête*, that the universe had done its day's work, and arrived at the hour of reward; that the white lily of joy blows only in still waters, and that repose is the sweet flower which should crown the thorny branches of toil.

But in this unfavavoured land, though the tree of toil puts out strong branches, and its thorns are many and fearful, for so much as I can see or learn, it rarely adorns itself with blossoms. The people stumble over each other in their efforts to get first to-morrow; and when they have reached to-morrow they hurry on to a day beyond. Sometimes they look back upon yesterday with regret, but to-day they always despise. The present is but a bridge, and the future the shore they desire, but the bridge lengthens as they go, and the shore recedes; and there are no islands on the way, and it leads to a grave-yard at last.

What is the effect of all this toil, this endless hurry, this pushing aside or overturning of competitors in the prizeless race? The purposes of life are not accomplished. Alternation is a law of nature; day should alternate with night; sleep with waking; darkness with light; repose with toil. But here the people overwork themselves in a vain chace. Their machinery is always at work; their furnaces are always burning. There is always a storm in their minds—no calm. They do not keep up in their lives the balance that nature requires. They *do* too much and *feel* too little. They hurry together like pigs to the trough; and the stronger push aside the weak, and gorging themselves, leave the others to starve, when there ought to be food for all. One half of the people so overwork themselves as to have no time left for enjoyment; the other half, for want of work, which is all seized upon by the greediness of the first, are without means of enjoyment for their idle time. If the first half would give poppy-dew to the scrambling dragons that keep too much awake in their breasts, the latter might do their share of the general work, and both might have leisure and means to drink from the great cup of enjoyment, which the summer evening mixes (stirring it with

the sunset's golden spoon), from the calm of nature and the repose of duty done.

But a people who know not the beauty of repose, know not beauty; and greatly are the artist eyes of your Sam-Sing offended by the absence of beauty in all the things around. The houses are lofty, each trying to look over the other; but where are the carven roofs, where are the lattices golden and green? where are the red pillars and the dragon-fringed cornices? Truly, of these there are none. Plain are their walls, and of rudest burnt earth, painted only by the smoke of their multitudinous fires to a colour like the mud of the slow creeping Skum. The windows are square holes, that let in the light by measure. You have often heard in the Central Land that the barbarians of the "White Island," (I tell you that this White Island is the blackest of all lands,) have no other object in life than to buy and sell; but will it be believed in Canton that they buy and sell the sky? that they pay for light and air by square measure? that the coloured buttons (who, however, do not wear coloured buttons here), farm out the heavens at per yards and barleycorns, and at last charge the people for a most indifferent article? Yet such, I am assured, is the case. Nowhere else in the wide world is this so? yet nowhere else in the wide world, surely, is the light so largely adulterated with darkness. Methinks, would they lay their charge on darkness instead of on light, it might at once tend somewhat to improve the condition of the people, and still yield a much larger revenue.

But to go back to the ugliness of all things: there are then their junks, and their iron-bellied dragons, that eat fire-stone and belch soot. Black are they, at the masts, with a white stripe. No change; no bright hues; green they have not, nor gold; they have neither red nor blue; saffron and purple are unknown amongst them. There are none of the goodly monsters with crocodile faces and flowery tails, devil-winged or cockatoo-crested, with which your Sam-Sing has given beauty to the flanks and the final arrangement of the venerable Keying; there are none of the fearful-faced shield of painted basket-work, whose terrible eyes and huge fangs so frightened every fierce enemy, that none ventured within sight during our long passage over the ocean; and for flags, though they have them, they seldom shew more than one at a time, and that of plain bars of colour, unadorned with monsters

of the air or sea. I would that my graceful lizard could be for a moment transported hither from her barge on the Kum-Sloa-Song, that she might behold with what feats of art her Sam-Sing has adorned the saloon; what flowers flying in the air, what butterflies growing on stems, what delicate ladies tottering on clouds! what warriors making havoc of the heavens with their lances! what wild beasts striking down trembling buttercups! what bridges, stretching from cloud to cloud! what ladders, reaching up the sides of rivers! what boats, curveting through the sky!—all the ingenious devices, not copied from things as they appear, but whose models are built in the inventive workhouse of the mind, and which are understood only by the natives of our flowery land. I would she were here, that she might see, and then compare with the saloon of the Keying the low dark cabins of the best of the White Island junks.

Nor will I speak of our goodly and adorned lanterns, nor contrast them with the miserable lamps hung in the best chambers of those vessels; nor of our seats of rosewood and marble, which indeed are fit rather to be looked at than sat upon; balancing them against the long benches and goose-cages, which on board the barbarian ships are rather more unfit for each purpose than the other.

The beauty that addresses the nose is, in this Outer Land, still less understood than that which belongs to the eye. Flower-barges are not known here; and instead of the smell of burning incense and sweet woods, which do a gentle salutation to the nostrils on board the Keying, the barbarian junks are excellent only in ordours of tar, tallow, cockroaches, whale oil, and salt-fish; things under the ban of polite and well-educated noses, but which do not appear to give offence to the rude sniffing apparatus that stands so prominently out from the barbarian face.

But to go back to the beauty that belongs to the province of the eye, and which is more especially a matter of consideration with Sam-Sing, let us look as to matter of dress. Doubtless there are strange fashions in dress in all lands save the All-Enlightened; but though in odd corners there be certain apparels more scant, nowhere, I do certainly believe, are there any so graceless and ugly. And here I speak more decidedly of the dress of men than of woman. The colour is for the most part

black, and in all cases dingy; but the colour is superior to the form. The hideous coverings which they wear on their heads resemble nothing so much as the black tops of the smoke-towers in their scrambling dragons, and are in no way suggestive of the form of the human skull: yet I should judge them to be yet less adapted for comfort than for show; for instead of resting lightly on the head to throw off the rain and defend against the hot beams of the sun, they keep their places by pinching tightly the forehead and the general circumference of the head, and I often see, on their removel, a red wheal left over the brows. The clothing of the limbs is such as neither to define the form nor gracefully to conceal it, and but makes the legs and the arms look like charred sticks. The principal body garment is of the strangest conceivable shape, with half-formed wings in front like those of a chrysalist breaking its shell, and a dangling appendage behind to which the heavens, the earth, and the sea offer me no object of comparison, unless, indeed, I may assimilate it to the folded wing-covers of the praying mantis. I know not whether this extraordinary tail is designed to hide or to ornament that portion of the form to which it is appended: if the latter, it fails wholly; if the former, it is ineffective in a breeze. Sometimes, however, this garment is made wider at the base, so as to reach quite round the body, and in that case it is somewhat less ungraceful.

The ladies do sometimes wear apparel of bright colours, and in the forms of their raiment approach more nearly to what is seen in the Civilized Land. Golden lilies,* however, are not known among them; and instead of tottering with the grace of the hidden pearls in the great houses of our realm, they leap about as merrily, and with feet as largely developed as the beloved silver shrimp of my own duck-barge. Yet Sam-Sing must confess, to his perversion of taste, that these feet do not offend him as ugly; and, indeed, he could say more respecting the personal charms of the women of this outermoust land, but that he will not convey to his beloved Weep-Weep,—it might in a measure militate against her slumbers, and make her forgetful of her charge.

Now as the matter I have confided to this paper is not short,

* A name applied to the small feet of Chinese ladies.—*Trans.*

but long, and as he that bears too much may lose some upon the way, I discharge it, bidding it to convey my dearest commendations to my well-tuned cymbal, and to her father, and her mother, and to our uncles and our aunts, and to our brothers and our sisters, and to our cousins to the last degree; and to our nieces and our nephews, and to our friends and to our neighbours, and to the mottled cat and to the grey dog, if they be not yet eaten; and many profoundest compliments, with spills of incense-paper, to the venerated Joss of the Yellow-Tailed Dragon. This is from Sam-Sing.

# LETTER FROM STEOO-FIN TO PIN-WING.

**From Steoo-Fin, Cook to the Keying, to Pin-Wing, of the same calling in Canton.**

GREETING to Pin-Wing. It comes from Steoo-Fin. A land without rice, without betel, without samshoo, have we not come, think you, to the world's outside? They neither roast rats nor stew them, but suffer them to run free in their drains. How good is a cat in a pie they know not, nor what tenderness dwells in blind puppies; yet I am told that their cooks mince these savoury things and put them in rolls unknown to the eaters, and that so taken they are favourite fare. They have earth-worms, —witness that I gathered a jar-full last night,—but they know not to salt them; nor understand they the luxury of grubs. Yet these people make their belly their joss, and bring it offerings from all the ends of the earth. Certain of our young countrymen whom we have seen here, and who speak the barbarian tongue, say that nowhere does a joss receive so much homage, that nowhere do worshippers devote so much time to his service. When they would show themselves benevolent they bestow a costly dinner on their joss; when they would be grateful for services done they pamper their joss more and more; ere they go on a journey they sacrifice largely; when they stop on their way they forget not their joss; when they arrive at the end they make more offerings. When they meet upon business they say, "Let us first think of the joss;" and when they assemble for pleasure, be sure, they leave not their josses behind. A right thing it is to be pious to josses; but this uttermost people know not the true worship, nor understand birds'-nest soup. If the emperor of the land and his wife, who came to see the Keying, and asked many ·lish questions though the speakers of two tongues concerning roach-jelly and toads' griskins, and others of our delicate s, should offer Steoo-Fin a large wage to teach his art to

their ignorant scullions, he would learn them some secrets worth pearls. So for this time I wipe with my pigtail the dust from your reverenced ladle.

I have pondered the matter deeply and long, and with anxious desire to draw the grub out of the tree; but though I have read earnestly the nine hundred books of strategy, I cannot convince myself quite certainly that though we send hither many junks, we can easily return upon the barbarians the insults and injuries done by their scrambling dragons. Therefore, how saith the sage Confutsee? "Sticks to the weak, salutations to the strong; let the wise man carry honey and gall; though he mix, where he can, the latter with the enemy's rice, let him pour out the honey when the drippings may reach his own dish." This people is brought up to kick from the cradle, and on that account it were not politic to wear too active a spring in the knee. Unfortunately, they know not our tongue, and are not frightened, therefore, by the terrible threats on our banners. I hesitate to pronounce that we may conquer them with frowns. Without doubt we may do so with smiles.

Let the truth be spoken at all times, though in whispers where it should not be heard. Barbarians, it is known, are barbarians, which far be it from me to gainsay; but barbarians are not equally bare, either as to body or mind. There are of them who wear no garments, and whose souls are as naked as their skin. The monkeys of our woods are of this class; the apes also, and baboons, and some of the natives of Siam. Yet the barbarians of the White Island, as, indeed, is already known at Canton, though more furious and harder to tame, are not precisely such. They wear garments, though uncouth and not of goodly colours; and they are not without arts and a certain degree of learning. Schools have they, and the rod is not unknown among them, though heaven has not favoured this outside land with the fortunate growth of bamboos. Indeed, Keying has been greatly astonished to see how much advance they have made towards civilization, considering the limited intercourse they have had with the Celestial Land. It is not superior art, but a pride beyond that of the poplar, and a lust to turn all things to gain, that has caused them to erect bridges larger and stronger than ours, always excepting the sacred bridge built by Hoo-Hoo in the

centre of our land, which no eye of mortal since hath dared ventured to look on. They have bridges both of iron and stone, formed of vast blocks neatly jointed together, and with arches (let truth always be spoken) higher than a rocket could reach; and their principal joss-house, which stands in the centre of their city, much larger than a mountain, so that the eye, cannot look on both sides at one time, seems carven out of a moon that hath fallen on a vasty crater. Let it be said again, it is pride and not art that hath made them swell their buildings so greatly beyond our size; for who shall deny that should the emperor let the word be spoken, none but the builders of the Celestial Land could erect a casing of stone to enclose all the blue of heaven, in which the sun and moon should hang as lanterns, and the stars be inlaid as jewels? But the emperor hath not spoken this, and the thing hath not been done.

FO SAVE THE EMPEROR!

# NOTES.

We have judged it expedient to append a few notes to the foregoing stories. Fully to illustrate all the usages and things referred to in the narratives, would swell the commentary to a bulk exceeding that of the text.

## HO-FI OF THE YELLOW GIRDLE.

### Note A, p. 1.

Tradescant Lay, the author of a highly interesting volume called "China As It Is," has given no very enchanting picture of the feet of Chinese ladies. From his connexion with the British Medical Board at Canton, he has had opportunities of seeing them without the covering; and he declares that the "golden lilies" would never have obtained the admiration they now excite among the men of China, were they not always concealed with Masonic secrecy.

### Note B, p. 3, & 122.

The College of Hanlan is the University of the Chinese empire: the buildings devoted to it form part of the imperial residence at Peking. None are admitted as its members but those who have obtained the highest honours at the great provincial schools throughout the kingdom; and thus it may be considered as containing the very cream of Chinese wit and learning. A grand commemoration is held triennially; and those who distinguish themselves in its examinations are appointed to fill some of the highest offices of the state.

### Note C, p. 11.

"The Chinese seldom select, for burial places, situations capable of agricultural use and improvement; and inter their deceased friends on the hill-side, or under the craggy precipice, where little else could be made of the soil.

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"At the great island of Choo-san, scores of coffins were observed under a precipice, scattered about in confusion, some fresh and others in a state of decay, all denied the right of sepulture from the crying necessity of a want of room."—MEDHURST'S *State and Prospects of China*, p. 31.

NOTE D, p. 12.

"The Orphan of the House of Chao."—This tragedy was, many years ago, translated into French, and from the French version into English. It formed the ground-work of Voltaire's "Orphelin de la Chine." Such unusual stratagems as that mentioned in the text abound in this curious specimen of Chinese dramatic art.

NOTE E, p. 13.

"There is a species of white-necked crow, for which they have a high veneration." A gentleman, in the late embassy, gave great offence by shooting one of these birds. The respect paid to them appears to have arisen "from their having once performed some essential public service; just as geese are said to have saved the Roman Capitol."—DAVIS'S *Chinese*, p. 241,

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## KUBLAI KHAN.

NOTE F, p. 27.

"With foong-hangs rare
Of jewels and gold—"

"The Chinese women sometimes wear an ornament representing the foong-hang, or Chinese phœnix, composed of gold and jewels, the wings hovering, and the beak of the bird hanging over the forehead, on an elastic spring."—DAVIS'S *Chinese*, chap. x.

NOTE G, p. 29.

"Tied by their pigtails."

The fashion of shaving the head and leaving only one long lock at the crown, was originally a Tartar practice, and was only adopted by the Chinese, upon compulsion, at the beginning of their reigning dynasty. On this, as on some other points, the ingenious Klang has not always been careful, nor (as it would seem) desirous, to avoid anachronism. Indeed the same might

be observed of several of the writers of whom we have given specimens in this collection; and it may, perhaps, be fairly inferred from this that the organ of time is not, in general, strongly developed among the Chinese.

### Note H, p. 29.

"Slung over their shoulders thus tied by their queues—"

A very interesting narrative has been published by a person named Glasspoole, who was an officer on board an English merchant vessel, of his captivity and adventures among the Ladrone pirates, on the south coast of China. He attended them sometimes in their raids upon the sea-coast towns and villages; and on one occasion, when the pirate captain had offered a reward for each head of a Chinese, he mentions having seen a Ladrone with his sword drawn and dripping with blood, engaged in pursuit of a villager; whilst the heads of two whom he had just slaughtered were suspended on either side his neck, their pigtails being knotted together.

### Note I, p. 37.

The description in the text of the military heroes of China closely resembles those given by Tradescant Lay, and others of our own writers.

In Alexander's "Picturesque Representations of the Dress and Manners of the Chinese," the following observations are appended to a plate representing a soldier of infantry.

"The annexed figure, either from the striped dress, or the furious-looking head painted on the shield, has been called a tiger of war; but he is not so fierce as he appears to be, or as the name would imply; indeed, the Chinese admit that the monstrous face on the basket-work shield is intended to frighten the enemy, and make him run away; like another Gorgon's head, to petrify those who look upon it. This corps of infantry, in its exercise, assumes all kinds of whimsical attitudes, jumping about and tumbling over each other, like so many mountebanks." The writer adds a truism; "Indeed the whole of the Chinese military tactics are *as absurd as they are ridiculous.*"

## HYSON AND BOHEA.

### Note K, p. 54.

"—— The bird's-nest soup of life—"

It need scarcely be mentioned that bird's-nest soup is one of the delicacies most in esteem among the epicures of the Flowery Land. The nests used in its composition are those of the Java swallow, and are said to be formed of a gelatinous matter obtained from insects. These nests constitute one of the government monopolies, and, the importation being large, form a considerable source of revenue.

### Note L, p. 54.

" ——That gloomy night no bat would flit,
But crows around flew late and oft alit—"

In China, bats are considered creatures of good omen; but crows (with the exception of that white-necked species of which mention is made in the story of "Ho-Fi") are regarded as birds of evil augury.

### Note M, p. 56.

" ——As a thresher whirls round in a trice
The ponderous flail, and thrashes out the rice—"

"The grain (rice) has been said to be trodden out sometimes by cattle; but the most usual implement for threshing is the common European flail."—Davis's *Chinese*, chap. xxi.

### Note N, p. 57.

" Though parted here, we soon may meet above."

"It is specifically urged against the doctrines of Fo by the Confuscians, that they unfit men for the business and duties of life by fixing their speculations so entirely on another state of existence, as to lead some fanatics to hang or drown themselves, in order to anticipate futurity; *nay, two persons have been known to commit suicide together, with a view to becoming man and wife in the next world.*"—Davis's *Chinese*, chap. xiv.

## THE PORCELAIN BATH.

### Note O, p. 64.

"The bottle-gourd, a curious species of the genus *cucurbitus*, closely resembling a bottle, is represented in ornaments as an emblem of longevity."—Davis's *Chinese*. This was not, however, the species of gourd that the Emperor resembled in his form. Much superstitious regard is paid to the peach-tree. At a particular season, sprigs of this plant are placed at door-ways to avert misfortunes. The ky-lin is a fabulous animal, of which carven representations are often worn about the person as a charm. It is said to have appeared at the birth of Confucius."—*Ibid.*

### Note P, p. 68.

"Though there are some Chinese words which appear to be dissyllable, and are written with a diæresis, as këen, tëen, &c., yet they are as really monosyllabic, and sounded as much together as our words, 'beer,' and 'fear.'"—Medhurst's *State and Prospects of China*.

### Note Q, p. 70.

"When a new Emperor accedes to the throne, it is said that very respectable persons of the country take their daughters to the palace for his choice; and the families of such as are accepted think themselves highly honoured." Staunton, from whom the above is quoted, has not mentioned, what we have discovered, from the papers of Poo-Loo, to be the fact, that from among those thus offered as handmaidens, one, more beautiful or more fortunate than the rest, is sometimes elected by the sovereign as his future Empress.

### Note R, p. 74.

"The general proneness of the Chinese to superstitious practices could not be more completely proved than by an account of the charms, talismans, and felicitous appendages hung up in houses, or worn about the person, specimens of which were sent home a short time since to the Royal Asiatic Society, by Mr. J. Morrison. Among the principal are 'money-swords,' consisting of a number of ancient copper coins, each with a square hole in the middle, fastened together with a piece of iron, shaped like a

sword with a cross hilt."—See DAVIS's *Chinese*, chap. xv., where will be found a further account of Chinese spells and talismans.

NOTE S, p. 77.

"The manufacture of porcelain commenced with the Tang dynasty, A.D. 630, and the first furnace on record is that at Chang-nan, in the province of Kiang-si, from whence a tribute of porcelain was sent to the court of Han Kaoutsoo, and called 'imitation gem ware.'—MEDHURST's *State and Prospects of China*, p. 115.

"The famous furnaces of King-te-chin, just to the eastward of the Poyang lake, were not established until about A.D. 1000."—DAVIS's *Chinese*, chap. xviii.

NOTE T, p. 82.

From a comparison of the following passage from "Davis's Chinese," with the story of Poo-Loo, it will be seen that the French writer, Dentrecolles, has given a pretty correct account of the origin of the god of the furnaces; but he has omitted the name of the deified youth, and has made no mention of the Empress.

"This god, according to Dentrecolles, owed his origin to the difficulties encountered by the workmen in executing some orders from Peking, on account of the Emperor. Several models were sent from thence, of a shape and size which defied all the efforts of the people to imitate them. * * * Rewards and punishments were held out to those employed, but all in vain; when one of the workmen, reduced to despair by the result of his unavailing efforts, threw himself into the red-hot furnace, and was instantly consumed. The story says that the specimens then baking came out perfectly fine and conformable to the models, and from that time the unfortunate victim passed for a divinity, becoming the god of the furnace."—DAVIS's *Chinese*, chap. xviii.

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HWANG-TE.

NOTE U, p. 98.

"From the earliest antiquity the Emperor has set an example of industry to his people, by personally and publicly holding the plough once a year, while the Empress does the same with regard to the loom."—MEDHURST's *State and Prospects of China*, p. 32.

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## MARRIAGE IN A MASK.

### NOTE V., p. 99.

"In China the luxury of shampooing is enjoyed by all ranks of men; it consists of pulling the joints until they crack, and of thumping the muscles until they are sore. It is generally an operation performed by the barbers, who at the same time cleanse the ears, tickle the nose, and play a thousand tricks to please and amuse their customers, to whom, and the surrounding audience, they tell their gossiping stories."—ALEXANDER'S *Picturesque Representations of the Chinese.*

### NOTE W., p 99.

"Every substance likely to answer the end is anxiously collected, and carefully disposed, so as to provide for future exigencies; such as decayed animal and vegetable matter, the sweeping of streets, the mud of canals, burnt bones, lime, and, what is not a little singular, the short stumpy human hair, shaven from millions of heads, every ten days, is industriously gathered up, and sold for manure throughout the empire."—MEDHURST'S *State and Prospects of China*, p. 34.

### NOTE X, p. 105.

*Yang* and *Yin* are terms in Chinese physiology, applied reciprocally to heat and cold, to energy and inertion, and generally to the active and the passive principles, whether in the constitution of man, or of external nature: and upon their proper adjustment depend health in the former, and stability with progression in the operations of the latter.

### NOTE Y, p. 111.

"And ducks are whistled home to roost—"

Immense numbers of ducks are reared by that part of the Chinese population who spend their lives in boats upon the rivers; and these birds, salted and dried, form one of the chief articles of diet in the Celestial Land. They are kept in large cages, or crates; from which in the morning they are sent forth to seek food upon the river banks: a whistle from their keeper brings them back in the evening; and, as, according to Tradescant Lay, the last to return receives a flogging for his tardiness, their hurry to get back to the boats, when they hear the accustomed call, is in no small degree amusing.

### NOTE Z, p. 122, see NOTE B, p. 3.

## THE STUDENT OF HANLAN.

### NOTE *A*, p. 129.

"——A similar spirit to Fo—"

"One of the favourite doctrines of Buddha (or Fo) is, that all things originated in nothing, and will revert to nothing. Hence annihilation is the summit of bliss; and *nirupa*, *nirvana*, or nonentity, the grand and ultimate anticipation of all. Contemplation and abstractedness of mind, with a gradual obliteration of all sense and feeling, are considered the nearest approaches to bliss obtainable on earth; and the devotees of this system aim and affect to have no joys or sorrows, hopes or fears, sense or emotion, either of body or mind; living without looking, speaking, smelling, or feeling; yea, without eating, and without breathing, until they approach to that enviable state of perfection, annihilation:"—MEDHURST'S *State and Prospects of China*, p. 215.

For a collection of evidence as to the horrors of opium-smoking, See "The Iniquities of the Opium Trade with China," by the Rev. S. A. Thelwall.

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## THE FEAST OF LANTERNS.

### NOTE *B*, p. 157.

"'Venerable uncle,'—'honourable brother,'—'virtuous companion,'—'excellent sir,' are used in addressing a stranger, instead of the pronoun *you*: and 'the worthless fellow,'—'the late born,'—'the unworthy disciple,' instead of *I*, are terms of common occurrence. 'What is your noble patronymic?' is the first question; to which the usual reply, is, 'My poverty-struck family name is so and so.' Again the question is asked respecting the 'honourable appellation, the exalted age, and the famous province' of the stranger; which questions are replied to by applying to one's self the epithets 'ignoble, short-lived, and vulgar.' * * * 'Honourable young gentleman,' for a friend's son; and 'the thousand pieces of gold' for his daughter, are usual appellations; while the individual replies by bestowing the epithets, 'dog's son,' and 'female-slave' on his own offspring."—MEDHURST'S *State and Prospects of China*, p. 100,

THE END.